Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Vol. 34, Issue 1
JANUARY 2026

Big Finish

Great Notion retirement leaves void among regional stallions

Country Life Winners

IN THE SALES RING AND AT THE TRACK

Jim McCue

HANDSINTHEAIR, F. BY GUN RUNNER OUT OF STARR OF QUALITY

Handsintheair

Bred in Maryland by Country Life and Starr of Quality LLC. Sold at Saratoga for $775,000 by her breeders. Broke her maiden in Laurel Park allowance on Dec. 5 by 11¾ lengths.

Country Life stallions enjoy successful 2025

Equi-Photo, Inc.

DIVINING ROD got his 8th stakes winner when 2-year-old **DIVINE INTENTIONS** won Parx's Shamrock Rose S by 3 lengths on Nov. 26

Jim McCue

Maryland's 2025 second-leading active sire by average earnings ($35,206), **MOSLER** boasts the 2nd TOP 2025 EARNER among active Maryland sires with **QUINT'S BREW** (above), a 2-time SW and twice graded SP in 2025.

Maryland-Sired Maryland-Breds
earn 40% higher bonuses for their breeders!

STANDING AT STUD FOR 2026

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**State-bred and state-sired races excluded except at Colonial Downs and NSA-sanctioned meets in VA*

See VaBred.org for program details or contact the Virginia Thoroughbred Association at 434-977-3716

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

— Set List —

Regional stallions try to step into void

The retirement of leading sire Great Notion – whose last foals arrive this year – leaves room for some others to step forward. Maryland-bred hero Post Time joins ranks at Northview Stallion Station. Kentucky's Cross Traffic relocates to Virginia. By Joe Clancy. Page 32

Next Girl shines at Claiming Crown

Maryland-bred and -based Next Girl represents the region and trainer Robbie Bailes with a win at the National HBPA's Claiming Crown at Churchill Downs in Kentucky. By Paul Halloran. Page 46

Steeplechase Times: Champ Snap Decision retires

A fixture on the National Steeplechase Association circuit since 2019, millionaire Snap Decision finishes racing career and transitions to life as a foxhunter. By Joe Clancy. Page 52

Steeplechase Times: 25 for 25

Rolling through 25 achievements, moments and more as the 2025 season rides record purses to its finish at the Colonial Cup in South Carolina. By Sean Clancy. Page 54

— Entries —

Post Time 8

The Starting Gate 12

Next Chapters 26
Garcon d'Or

From the Editor 30

In Memoriam 58

— The Paddock —

Maryland newsletter 59

New Jersey newsletter 67

North Carolina newsletter 71

Pennsylvania newsletter 73

South Carolina newsletter 77

Virginia newsletter 79

West Virginia newsletter 81

Steeplechase newsletter 83

— Evening Stables —

Classifieds & Index 85

Looking Back 86

Past Time 88

On our cover: Pensioned before the 2026 season by Northview Stallion Station, standout stallion Great Notion leaves an impact on Mid-Atlantic breeding and racing. *Barbara D. Livingston*

The WV Program–
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10% INCREASE in purses effective July 17,2025

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The WV BREEDERS PROGRAM OFFERS SOME OF THE BEST INCENTIVES IN THE NATION–Find another program like it in the country!

- West Virginia offers year-round racing with 160 days of racing per year, with **at least FIVE** West Virginia-restricted races offered each racing day at West Virginia race tracks exclusively for accredited WV-bred and/or -sired horses.
- West Virginia-bred horses can go through their conditions **twice**, once in restricted WV-bred races, and then again in open races at West Virginia tracks.
- The WV Thoroughbred Development Fund distributes **over $4 M** to breeders, owners, and sire owners of accredited WV-bred and/or -sired horses each year.
- The West Virginia Breeders Classics pays out approximately **$1M** in purses for accredited WV-bred and/or -sired horses each October.
- **$800,000** is distributed annually in restricted WV stakes races for accredited WV-bred and/or -sired horses.
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- **AND** WV breeder awards are earned from **first to last place**!

It's time to breed or own West Virginia-breds

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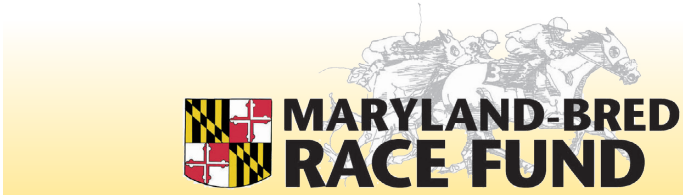
For West Virginia-bred foals to be eligible for accreditation, mares foaling in West Virginia must become resident mares or be bred back to an accredited West Virginia stallion.



Registered Maryland/Virginia-Bred and/or Maryland/Virginia-Sired Stakes Schedule

Through March 2026

January 17

$100,000 JENNINGS 4YO & Up, 1 Mile

$100,000 GEISHA 4YO & Up, Fillies and Mares, 1 Mile

March 7

$100,000 CONNIVER 4YO & Up, Fillies and Mares, 7 Furlongs

$100,000 NOT FOR LOVE 4YO & Up, 6 Furlongs

Maryland Stallion Season Auction

Benefiting

THE Maryland Horse FOUNDATION

February 7–10, 2026

Donations due February 2

Please contact Maryanna Skowronski to donate
Maryanna@marylandthoroughbred.com

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Volume 34, Issue 1

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WINTER MEET OPENING WEEKEND

JANUARY 9 & 10 • FIRST RACE 12:00PM

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JANUARY 9 & 10

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TIME FOR A NEW APPROACH

Fasig-Tipton is introducing two major enhancements to the under tack show at this year's Midlantic May 2YO's in Training Sale: **untimed workouts** and **restricted crop use**. These updates are designed to better showcase each horse's natural athleticism and, ultimately, help produce more young horses prepared to transition smoothly from the sales ring to the racetrack—and, soon enough, to the starting gate.

OFF THE CLOCK

All under tack show performances will be untimed; Fasig-Tipton will not time workouts. Consignors may breeze or gallop, whichever they feel is most appropriate for their horse. *No official times will be recorded or published by Fasig-Tipton.*

RESTRICTED USE OF THE RIDING CROP

A rider will no longer be permitted to remove their hands from the reins to strike a horse at any point before a breeze, during a breeze, or galloping out. A rider's hands may only come off the reins in the case of horse or rider safety.

These under tack show format changes were driven by insights gained following an unplanned but revealing trial at the 2025 Midlantic May Sale, which saw an unprecedented amount of rain.

2026
Midlantic May
TWO-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING

MAY 18-19

UNDER TACK SHOW: **MAY 12-14 | TIMONIUM, MD**

*Violence c., now a stakes winner named BOYD, sells for **$1,050,000** off an untimed workout.*

2025 STATS

		OVER 2024
RECORD	GROSS **$44,317,500**	+35%
RECORD	AVERAGE **$135,528**	+42%
RECORD	MEDIAN **$60,000**	+20%

Entries Close: February 2

INTRODUCING A NEW UNDER TACK SHOW FORMAT IN 2026!

Fasig-Tipton

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Post Time

HAPPY FEET. West Virginia-bred star Penguin Power – here winning the 2023 Dash for Cash on West Virginia Breeders Classics night – was retired after nine seasons on the track. The son of Fiber Sonde won 21 of 49 starts, including five Breeders Classics races, while earning $646,334 for owner David Raim and trainer Jeff Runco. *Coady Photography*

9
9
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TOTALS
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2026 Maryland Broodmare Incentive Program

Get back 20% of your purchase price on NEW Maryland Broodmares

To Qualify:

Mares foaling in 2026 must be purchased from a recognized public auction. The purchased mare must not have foaled in Maryland the previous two years and must be in foal for 2026 at the time of purchase. The mare must drop her 2026 foal* in Maryland and be bred to a Maryland stallion** in the 2026 breeding season.

Incentive Structure

20% reimbursement of purchase price (with a minimum qualifying purchase of $5,000 and a maximum payout per mare of $6,000). Limited reimbursement up to $10,000 to one individual/entity. Program limited to a total of $50,000 for 2026 incentives.

Application Requirements

- **Invoice** from a recognized sales company and proof of payment
- Copy of mare's **registration papers**
- **Vet certificate** confirming the mare is at least 45 days in foal
- Signed **Confirmation of Cover** from farm standing Maryland stallion
- Signed **Commitment to Program Terms** by applicant

Administration & Compliance: The program runs until the end of the 2026 breeding season. Available funds of $50,000 for 2026 applicants. Incentives will be paid on a first come, first served basis. A wait list will be created as fully completed and accepted applications are received in the mail. If a mare aborts or does not get in-foal, eligibility will be retained for the 2026 program if all other criteria are met. Ownership of mare cannot be transferred until program commitments are fulfilled.

Maryland Horse Breeders Association

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**Foal must be eligible to be registered Maryland-bred. **Must be a verified Maryland stallion*

Maryland stallions earn you 40% higher breeder bonuses for your MD-breds *

Breed to a MD stallion!

- **Maryland-breds earn 22.5% breeder bonuses on purses earned for first through third finishes when running in Maryland.* Stakes capped at $100K**
- **Breeding to MD stallions makes your MD-bred eligible for 31.5%** breeder bonuses in all overnight races****
- **MD-sired MD-breds earn an additional 7.5% breeder bonus on maiden wins*****
- **MD-breds run for 30% more**

(In Maryland, registered Maryland-bred horses are eligible to compete for 30% additional purse earnings in overnight races, comprised of a 15% Owner Bonus and a 15% Developer Bonus, as established under the Maryland Thoroughbred Purse Account jointly administered by the MTHA and TMJC.)

ONLY registered Maryland-breds are eligible for MD Fund bonuses. MD Stallions must be registered with MD Fund program.

**As of 2/25; subject to change as determined semi-annually by the Maryland Racing Commission.*
***beginning with 2-year-olds of 2025.*
****for foals born prior to 2023.*
Bonuses for Maryland Million Day are calculated separately.

Maryland Horse.
MarylandThoroughbred.com

MARYLAND: A foundation of greatness, a bright future ahead

Say It Again

"It is a business and if you don't look at it like that, you'll hurt yourself in the long run. We love all of our horses, but you have to approach it like that."
Owner/breeder Eric Rizer, about balancing perspectives in the Thoroughbred industry

"You didn't have to worry what mare you sent to him, you'd get a runner."
Breeder and bloodstock advisor George Adams, on the legacy of stallion Great Notion

"He's down in the meadow. I don't know if we've caught him since we put him in there."
Atlanta Hall Farm's Gary Murray, on 2010 steeplechase champion Slip Away (who last raced in 2013 and turns 23 this month)

"The horse business is a lot of bad luck, but you're not going to always have bad luck. You can't always have bad luck, you've got to have good luck sometimes too."
Owner/trainer/breeder Ronney Brown, on sticking with it in the Thoroughbred business

Go Figure

139 Dollars Call Sign Seven, bred in Kentucky by Marylander Caroline Stautberg's Willow Oaks Stable, paid for a $2 win bet in the Seabiscuit Handicap-G2 at Del Mar Nov. 29. The 4-year-old colt, trained by Michael McCarthy for Savio-Cannon Thoroughbreds, won for the third time and was making his first start since March.

84,000 Dollars raised for charity by the 2025 Pennsylvania Hunt Cup steeplechase meet including $75,000 to the Chester County Food Bank.

49 Percent of West Virginia stallion Barbados' 2025 progeny earnings derived from one horse, $713,185-earner Barbadian Runner through Dec. 11. Standing at Pellinor Lane Farm, Barbados had sired 16 winners from 19 runners in 2025.

Names of the Month

Compiled by Barrie Reightler

God I Need a Favor. The now 3-year-old Maryland-bred filly, who races for Not The 1 Stable, is by Holy Boss. She won Oct. 31 and was beaten a head two weeks later at Laurel Park.

Ecumenical. Sticking with the spiritual theme, the now 4-year-old gelding is by Catholic Boy. Bred in Maryland by Rick Buckley and owned for SAB Stable, the chestnut won at Laurel Park in November.

Ijamsville. Bred by Randy and Alyse Cohen and co-owned by the family's Hickory Plains Farm – in the Frederick County community of Ijamsville, Md. – the now 5-year-old son of Temple City, co-owned with trainer Franklin G. Smith Jr., won at Mountaineer in November.

Guaio. A winner at Delaware Park in July and on the board in his last three starts at Parx, the Kentucky-bred son of World of Trouble's name means trouble in Italian.

Don't Get Cute. The West Virginia-bred, a maiden winner at Charles Town Nov. 19 for owner/breeder/trainer Christopher Keller, is by Mr. Prankster.

George Adams photo

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74% winners/runners

And after record bookings the past 2 seasons, Blofeld has 80 2-year-olds waiting in the wings. THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

Jersey Slide

A LONG WAY FROM ROOTS, LINO PADRINO SHINES IN DUBAI

By John Piassek

DUBAI RACING CLUB

Picture, if you will, a New Jersey-bred, Maryland-sired 2-year-old running off the screen on debut. Where do you imagine that race taking place? Probably Monmouth Park on a warm summer's day, or under the lights on the Meadowlands grass, or potentially on a fall afternoon at Laurel Park.

Lino Padrino, bred by Gina Lupton and her daughter, Kelly Lupton, and sired by Northview Stallion Station's Uncle Lino, broke his maiden in a slightly different locale. He dominated a 1,400-meter (approximately 7-furlong) maiden event at Dubai's Meydan Racecourse Dec. 5, winning by 4 lengths in 1:25.80 for British owners Suited and Booted and My Future Champions Racing, trainer Bhupat Seemar and jockey Tadhg O'Shea.

With this victory on a major stage, he's already exceeded the expectations of virtually everyone involved.

"The fact that he's gone so far away and done well makes me feel good," said Gina Lupton. "As a breeder/owner, the whole thing is what we aim for."

Lupton has been around horses her whole life. The New Jersey native grew up a few miles away from now-defunct Atlantic City Race Course, got her trainer's license in the early 1990s and spent a few years racing primarily at Atlantic City and Philadelphia Park (now Parx Racing). She won 14 races from 1994-97, including five in 1995 with a gelding named Another Appeal.

Managing a small stable helped Lupton learn multiple aspects of the racing industry, which led to the creation of her Black Oak Farm in Egg Harbor, N.J. The farm, named in tribute for a tree on the property incorrectly thought to be a black oak, offers raising, shipping, rehabilitation and boarding services.

Kelly is a large part of the operation, which also includes Black Oak South in Ocala, Fla. "Kelly grew up on the farm, and we're one and the

HOME TO **NO. 1 SIRES.**

	Into Mischief	$250,000
	Vekoma	$100,000
	Omaha Beach	$75,000
	Yaupon	$60,000
	Forte	$35,000
	National Treasure	$35,000
	Dornoch	$30,000
	Bolt d'Oro	$25,000
New	**Chancer McPatrick**	$25,000
	Jackie's Warrior	$25,000
	Taiba	$25,000
	Maximus Mischief	$20,000
	Kingsbarns	$17,500
	Arabian Lion	$15,000
	Authentic	$15,000
	Cyberknife	$15,000
	Goldencents	$10,000
	Mitole	$10,000
	Greatest Honour	$7,500
	Jimmy Creed	$7,500
	Rock Your World	$7,500
	Thousand Words	$7,500
	Vino Rosso	$7,500
	Zandon	$7,500
	Basin	$5,000
	By My Standards	$5,000
	Known Agenda	$5,000
	Mo Donegal	$5,000
	Temple City	Private

SPENDTHRIFT

same," said Gina. "We do everything together."

Kelly has run Black Oak South for the past six years, while Gina handled operations in New Jersey until last year, when she also relocated to Florida. The New Jersey farm is now run by Lupton's partners. Gina's training career helped launch her breeding operation, now 10 mares strong.

"If I trained them, I offered them a home for life," said Lupton. "There were a select few mares who, if they weren't able to go on as a second career, I'd take the chance at breeding them."

One of those mares was Padrinoneverquits, a Pennsylvania-bred El Padrino mare who won twice in Florida for owner/breeder A and B Stables. She earned $96,290 in 22 starts and finished her racing career in a $5,000 claimer at Parx in 2021. Lupton obtained her after her racing days were over.

After breeding her to Peace and Justice for 2022 and getting a still winless filly Bet On Beth, Lupton decided Uncle Lino would be a good fit for 2023.

"His body type fit the mare," said Lupton. "She had an A-plus nick to him, and you can't go wrong with the Uncle Mo line. We took a chance and it worked out."

The ensuing foal was Lino Padrino, born and raised at Black Oak. Right off the bat, the Luptons were impressed.

"He was the nicest baby you'd ever want to be around," Gina said. "He was super-easy to handle, very bulky. Always been an outstanding colt."

The Luptons prep their foals for sales, but not all are ultimately entered. When folks from the Twelve Toes consignment stopped by Black Oak in search of Jersey-breds to take to the 2025 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic 2-year-old sale, the chestnut colt with a wide blaze made the grade.

At the sale, compressed to one day with full-speed breezing limited for some horses due to track conditions, Lino Padrino galloped on the final day of the under-tack show May 18. Part of a large contingent of Middle Eastern buyers at the sale, Seemar didn't let the lack of a timed workout hold him back and he landed Hip 304 for $200,000.

Lupton was stunned by the price, the highest of the three Jersey-breds at the sale. "Any time you see a Jersey-bred sell for this kind of money, you're absolutely surprised," she said. Padrinoneverquits produced a 2024 New Jersey-bred Mutasaabeq filly, sold for $7,500 as a short yearling in January 2025. The mare did not get in foal for 2025 and was not bred for 2026.

Lino Padrino attracted some buzz before he raced, with a victory in a 1,000-meter (5-furlong) trial at Meydan Oct. 29. That set him up well for his debut, in which his 11 rivals included well-regarded Charlie Appleby trainee Ruler of Time. The $700,000 Godolphin yearling purchase proved to be no match for Lino Padrino, who impressed many in the Dubai racing scene.

"He was slow away in the trial and it was the same tonight," O'Shea told the Dubai Racing Club media department. "[In his maiden race], I kept him wide to the 800 meters, then he really jumped out at the 600 meters, then it was just hands and heels riding."

Some pundits are already fancying him as a contender for the prestigious UAE Derby-G2 in late March. The winner receives an automatic berth to the Kentucky Derby-G1.

"I've said all along you won't see the best of him until he goes two turns," said O'Shea. "I'll leave it to the trainer, but maybe he will work back from the UAE Derby and take in [a prep race] en route."

After more than three decades on the East Coast racing scene, Lupton is thrilled to have a colt she bred enjoy success and inspire dreams more than 6,000 miles away. The distance makes it difficult for her to follow his racing career and keep tabs on him to ensure he has a good home after he's run his last race.

"Because he's so far away, I can't say to send him back if he needs a home," said Lupton. "It's hard to be a responsible breeder and that makes it a little more difficult to [send horses] to sales because of that."

Still, that he's done well makes her feel good that he'll have a place to go in retirement and if he makes it to major races in the United States, the Luptons will be there to cheer.

"If he makes it to the Derby, we'd be right there rooting for him," Gina said. ■

Grades matter.

Brody's Cause

Giant's Causeway–Sweet Breanna (Sahm)

BY SIRE OF SIRES GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

Average earnings per starter, $47.115

Sire of Grade 1 winner **KALYPSO** ($607,638), who won or placed in SIX graded stakes and sold as a broodmare prospect for $2.1 million. Two-time G1-winning millionaire **BRODY'S CAUSE** is also sire of G3 winner **SITTIN ON GO** ($379,271), **PALUXY** ($275,886) and 17 additional stakes horses. $3,500 LFSN

Smarty Jones

Elusive Quality–I'll Get Along (Smile)

2025 TB HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

3YO Champion and multiple Grade 1 classic winner

$63,754 AE/starter with 71% winners/starters

Sired of 39 stakes winners, 3 champions, 25 graded stakes horses, Broodmare sire of 22 stakes winners world wide. $3,500 LFSN

Zozos

Munnings–Papa's Forest (Forestry)

GRADED STAKES-WINNING MILLIONAIRE

THREE 100+ BEYERS

Brilliant runner with seven wins in 15 starts, by a total of 20¼ lengths, from 6 fur. to 1⅛ mi. He won the Grade 3 Ack Ack S, Hanshin S, Knicks Go Overnight S; placed second in Grade 2 Louisiana Derby and third in Grade 1 Churchill Downs S. First foals arrive in 2026. $2,500 LFSN

Call Rodney Eckenrode 302-236-3886
EquistarTrainingCenter@yahoo.com

EQUISTAR Training & Breeding Annville, PA

Milestones

Launched

A racehorse naming website, The Jockey Club and Weatherbys, that enables users to check the potential availability of a Thoroughbred name in Great Britain, Ireland, the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. Racehorse Naming can be found at racehorsenaming.com and aims to streamline the naming process for owners and breeders and will be especially useful for unnamed Thoroughbreds bred or purchased in one country and imported to another, which requires name approval by the exporting and importing authorities. The Jockey Club oversees naming in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, and Weatherbys covers Great Britain and Ireland. The results of a name search on Racehorse Naming indicate if the name is potentially available in both jurisdictions, only one jurisdiction, or neither jurisdiction. Names indicated as potentially available through Racehorse Naming are still subject to further checks and final approval by the respective naming authority.

Won

The final turf race of 2025 at Maryland's Laurel Park, and the Mid-Atlantic region, Davyjonz when the Maryland-bred Bourbon Courage colt scored in a $48,500 allowance going a mile on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27. The date was the latest use of a turf course in Maryland since 2016 when the season concluded

There's a Warrant Out for Your Mare!

Constitution-Whisper Number, by First Samarai. $4,500 LFSN

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WARRANT is the Graded-Stakes Winning Millionaire Son of

Constitution:

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- Emerging Sire of Sires with leading young stallions **TIZ THE LAW** and **INDEPENDENCE HALL** plus Top-Booking NY Stallion **AMERICANREVOLUTION.**
- Sire of Current G1 Runner **MINDFRAME** $2,054,580.

Warrant:

- Earned $1.1 million in three seasons.
- On the board in 17 of 19 starts, winning from 6f to 1.5 miles, with 11 stakes wins or placings (six graded) at classic distances, including G1 Santa Anita H (recorded a 104 Beyer).

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Milestones

Dec. 4. According to a press release from The Maryland Jockey Club, Laurel hosted the third-most turf races in the country in 2025 (behind only Santa Anita and Gulfstream Park) and led the nation in turf races since April 1. Bill Knauf, president and general manager of TMJC, credited staffers John Banno, Tony Gatto, Daniel Finke Jr. and consultant Logan Freeman with helping make the usage possible.

Moved

Back almost a month later in the calendar, Fasig-Tipton Midlantic's fall yearling sale for 2026. Held in late September or early October the last several years, the sale is scheduled for Oct. 27 this year – making it the country's final yearling sale. The Timonium, Md., sale shrunk to just 197 horses offered in 2025 and the new date is partially in response to that trend while also reflecting a later-than-usual sales calendar. Keeneland hosts its September yearling sale Sept. 14-26. Fasig-Tipton's California yearling sale is Sept. 30. Florida's Ocala Breeders' Sales Company hosts a yearling sale Oct. 6-7 and Fasig-Tipton's Kentucky yearling sale is Oct. 19-22. "We're hoping that being later gives us more opportunity for horses that need a little time for whatever reason," said Fasig-Tipton Midlantic's Paget Bennett. "Plus we're trying to get more of the New York people to come to Maryland and they seemed positive about this change." Nominations for the sale close Aug. 3.

Announced

That it plans to relinquish its role as the operator and beneficiary of the Radnor Hunt Races steeplechase meet after the 2026 running, the Brandywine Conservancy. The 95th Radnor meet, scheduled for May 16 at its home near Malvern, Pa., west of Philadelphia, will mark the organization's final year at the helm. The Brandywine is committed to working closely with the leadership of the Radnor Hunt to help identify a new operator and work on a transition plan. "The Radnor Hunt Races have been a beloved springtime tradition on the Main Line for nearly a century – long before the Brandywine became the sole operator and beneficiary of the races in 1980 – and one that we hope will continue long after Brandywine's involvement," said Virginia Logan, the Frolic Weymouth executive director and CEO of the Brandywine Conservancy and Museum of Art. "For the last 45 years, the Brandywine has been proud to play a leadership role in this storied event, which has benefited the conservancy's open space and clean water initiatives." Built on a rich history of racing that has been cultivated in the region for nearly 100 years, the Radnor Hunt Races have been supported by the legacy of protecting open spaces. With the help of the races and many likeminded partners, the conservancy has protected more than 70,700 acres of open space – including the Radnor Hunt racecourse and surrounding lands – and continues to improve and safeguard water quality, land protection, outdoor recreation and historic preservation in southeastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware. "We were saddened to learn that 2026

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Milestones

will be the last year with Brandywine Conservancy as operator and sole beneficiary of the Radnor Hunt Races, and it will be our honor to partner with them for their 45th and final year," said Jodi Spragins, Radnor Hunt president. "We recognize that this was a challenging decision, and we want to express our profound gratitude for the incredible effort Brandywine has dedicated to nurturing the Radnor Hunt Races into the prestigious event it is today." The races are traditionally held on the third Saturday of May each year. With nearly 18 months of advanced notice prior to the 96th running of the Races in 2027, the Brandywine is hopeful that there will be ample time for the leadership of the Radnor Hunt to identify an alternative operator. Brandywine remains committed to helping the Radnor Hunt and any new operator with a successful transition. Those interested in taking over the operation of the races can contact the Radnor Hunt at gm@radnorhunt.org.

THE RACING BIZ
The Independent Voice for Mid-Atlantic Racing and Breeding

Pimlico Plus bonds receive AA rating: The Maryland Stadium Authority will look to sell more than $240 million in Pimlico Plus bonds, rated AA by ratings agencies, starting in December. Frank Vespe reports.

Sagamore in the running to be training center? Maryland's racing leadership long ago chose Shamrock Farm to be its new training center. So why is Sagamore Farm making its pitch? Vespe takes a look.

Hazlewood reaching for lofty heights: Apprentice Yedsit Hazlewood didn't start riding races until March, but his career has blasted off like a rocket, propelling to the top of the Laurel standings, making him a major Eclipse Award contender, writes Linda Dougherty.

Juvenile winners connect Sigler, Farrior barns: Masked-andmummed swept two November stakes at Charles Town, and a pair of other 2-year-olds impressed, reports Ted Black.

Longtime owner-breeder English died: Virginia-based owner-breeder Sam English, 80, passed away Nov. 27. Among his top runners was the multiple stakes winner Chambeau.

Protected

Nearly 350 acres of Virginia farmland where Triple Crown winner Secretariat and other Thoroughbred stars of the Chenery family's Meadow Stable were raised. Known as The Cove, the low-lying pasture bordered by the North Anna River near Doswell was the nursery for the broodmares and foals at farm, founded in 1936. In addition to Secretariat, the grasses nurtured celebrated Thoroughbreds such as Hall of Famers Riva Ridge, Cicada and Hill Prince in addition to Secretariat's dam Somethingroyal. Engel Family Farms purchased The Cove in 2023, and dedicated it to agricultural use. "Purchasing The Cove and restoring it to its heyday when Secretariat was running around on it has been a dream of mine for many years," said Kevin Engel. "It is so important for my business to secure farmland from the threats of big warehouses, solar panels, data centers, and housing subdivisions but also for my grandchildren to be on land that is preserved without asphalt and concrete everywhere." The Cove lies just north of the Meadow Event Park in Caroline County, also part of the original Meadow Stable. The park is the site of the State Fair of Virginia and owned by the Virginia Farm Bureau. Secretariat's foaling shed and other original barns there are designated state and national historical landmarks. The conservation easement protects 156 acres of agricultural cropland and 190 acres of forestland. Other protections afforded by the conservation easement on The Cove include approximately a half-mile along the North Anna River, which flows into the Pamunkey River and further downstream into the York River and Chesapeake Bay. A riparian buffer is required between the river and the historic dike. All new structures larger than 500 square feet must be constructed within a building envelope off Signboard Road, thus preserving the historic and scenic views for the traveling public along Route 30.

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Mid-Atlantic-bred Stakes Winners

JIM MCCUE

Barbadian Runner captured his sixth added-money event when he won Laurel Park's Richard W. Small Stakes Nov. 22. His 11 starts in 2025 also include three stakes-placings.

November 9 – December 8

Maryland-bred

BARBADIAN RUNNER, dk.b./br.g., 2022, Barbados—Quiet Run, by Northern Afleet. B-Shamrock Farm; O-AJ Will Win Stables; T-Henry Walters. $100,000 Richard W. Small S, Laurel, Nov. 22.

CODE OF SILENCE, dk.b./br.g., 2023, Blofeld—Tough Talkin Lady, by Oratory. B-Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Holt & Mr. & Mrs. Richard Palumbo; O-Mount Peru Farm; T-Tim Keefe. $125,000 Maryland Juvenile S, Laurel, Dec. 6.

GRAYSON'S GIRL, gr./ro.f., 2022, Gift Box—Drinking Dixie, by Quality Road. B-2500 Determined Stud; O-John Middleton; T-Brittany Russell. $100,000 Safely Kept S, Laurel, Nov. 29.

JUST PHILTORED, b.f., 2023, Great Notion—Slow and Steady, by Malibu Moon. B-ZWP Stable & Non Stop Stable; O-Red White & Blue Racing & London Reid Thoroughbreds; T-Mike Trombetta. $125,000 Maryland Juvenile Filly S, Laurel, Dec. 6.

Pennsylvania-bred

DIVINE INTENTIONS, dk.b./br.f., 2023, Divining Rod—Shyza, by Cairo Prince. B-Ed Bussinger; O-Carguys Racing; T-Tyler Servis. $100,000 Shamrock Rose S, Parx, Nov. 26.

MAILATA, b.c., 2023, Maximus Mischief—Bouquet of Gold, by Medaglia d'Oro. B/O-Cash Is King & LC Racing; T-Robert Reid Jr. $100,000 Pennsylvania Nursery S, Parx, Nov. 26.

MAXIMUS MERIDIUS, b.g., 2021, Maximus Mischief—Quiet Virtue, by Quiet American. B-Westerly Farm; O-LC Racing, Cash is King & Wellesley Stable; T-Robert Reid Jr. $75,000 Let's Give Thanks S, Parx, Nov. 26.

West Virginia-bred

MASKEDANDMUMMED, ch.f., 2023, Candygram—Mummers Parade, by Street Sense. B/O-Casey's Legacy; T-Ronald Sigler. $50,000 West Virginia Futurity, Charles Town, Nov. 22.

TEACHINTHERELEASE, dk.b./br.g., 2020, Windsor Castle—Romantic Cork, by Denis of Cork. B-John A. Casey; O-Robert Cole Jr.; T-Stephen Murdock. $75,000 Randy Funkhouser Memorial S, Charles Town, Nov. 15.

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- **Chad Frederick**, Buyer of '25 Judge Lee weanling at KeeNov

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— Next Chapters —

BY MAGGIE KIMMITT

Garcon d'Or

PHOTO COURTESY OF FRAN BURNS

It's fair to say Fran Burns is familiar to anyone affiliated with Thoroughbred racing in Maryland. The winner of the 2022 Joe Kelly Unsung Hero Award recently retired as president of the Maryland State Fair. She led the Sunrise at Old Hilltop backstretch tours during Preakness Week at Pimlico Race Course for 15 years. Along with Georganne Hale of the Maryland Jockey Club, Burns helped run the former Thoroughbred Alliance Show Series and the annual Canter for the Cause at Pimlico Race Course.

The industry would be hard-pressed to find a more dedicated ambassador. Yet, without hesitation, Burns will say that her favorite and most important role is owner to retired racehorses. And it was another industry affiliation that brought Garcon d'Or – called Gee – into Burns' life. The process began with, what else?, one of Burns' many roles.

"I am a long-term volunteer with Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue," she said. "I do marketing and promotions for them and have for 20 years."

MAHR's co-founder and executive director Bev Strauss vividly remembers the day in 2009 when she found Garcon d'Or.

"Basically, we were a mentor for Jo Deibel's Angel Acres Horse Rescue when they first started," Strauss said. "We would go to New Holland every Monday to buy Thoroughbreds. I would pick out horses for her that I thought were nice to handle and adoptable. I distinctly remember seeing Gee tied up midway down on the left side of the aisle past the ponies. He was such a gentleman. I could see he had some issues with his knees, but horses like that that are quiet are suitable for lower-level careers. Back in the day we would have to call into The Jockey Club to identify horses by their tattoos. I called Jo to tell her that we found a nice horse for her to put in her program. That is how Fran met him, and the rest is history."

As Angel Acres frequently handled MAHR's overflow, Burns volunteered there as well. Garcon d'Or – French for Golden Boy – caught her eye immediately.

"I'm just one of those people that there's a certain look to a Thoroughbred that I really, really like," Burns said. "And he has that classic look, that doe face, that kind eye."

It was several months before she realized that the gelding was by one of her all-time favorite racehorses, multiple graded stakes-winning millionaire Private Terms.

"He even paddles like his dad did," she laughed.

On Sept. 3, 2009, Burns signed the formal adoption agreement.

The backstory of Garcon d'Or is all too common. Bred by Sunset Haven Farm, he was foaled in Kentucky March 7, 2003. His dam, Peach d'Or, won nine of 57 starts and earned $144,356.

Garcon d'Or began his career as a 3-year-old on the South Florida circuit in 2006 for DeLuca and Sons Stable and trainer Rodolfo Garcia. He made 12 starts in claiming events (priced as high as $40,000) at Calder that year. All four of his wins occurred that season, with three scored consecutively in September, October and November.

In 2007, he made one start for his original connections at Gulfstream Park in February and was claimed for $10,000 from his next two starts – by William White for Pennston Farm in March and by Sherryl Meade for Lynn Acres in April – before missing the rest of that year.

He toiled at Gulfstream for four starts at 5 in 2008, gradually dropping down the claiming ranks. Sent to the Penn National barn of Jose Martinez, Garcon d'Or made his first start outside Florida in May 2008 – for a $3,500 claiming tag. After three more starts at the Grantville, Pa., track in 2008, his racing career ended with four wins, four seconds, a third and $40,091 in 23 starts.

There's no explanation as to how or why he ended up at New Holland, the Pennsylvania livestock auction. What Burns did know was that she was the new owner of a thin but handsome and charming 6-year-old with a sketchy knee. While there was no plan for a second career, Burns wanted more clarity on the condition. Extensive radiographs and a visit to Dr. Dean Richardson at New Bolton Center proved that Garcon d'Or had no history of fractures but was plagued by osteoarthritis.

"So Gee has a bit of a bum knee, and we just manage that. I have a bad back and he has a bad knee, so we made a great pair," Burns said. "Dr. Richardson said he could do very limited, maybe a 2-foot fence here and there, but I thought 'No.' And I'm certainly never going to sell him; he's my love.

"I did ride him a little bit and putzed around on him. If his knee had been better, I guarantee you he would have been a showstopper. He's got a lovely trot and he's just got that look. He's not real big, but he's put together. My focus at the time was with my other Thoroughbred, Dustin's Dreamer, who was so talented that I invested a lot of time and money taking him to horse shows."

Garcon d'Or soon found his niche at Burns' Boxwood Farm in Monkton, Md. As a Pimlico tour guide, Burns often met patrons from Sinai Hospital, the medical complex adjacent to the track. Patients and their families from Sinai's pediatric orthopedics program would come to Sunrise at Old Hilltop to enjoy the horses and take a break from the stress of treatments. One family, in Baltimore from Michigan with their young daughter, befriended Burns.

> "I'm just one of those people that there's a certain look to a Thoroughbred that I really, really like. And he has that classic look, that doe face, that kind eye."
>
> *– Fran Burns*

PHOTO COURTESY OF FRAN BURNS

"Their daughter had one leg that was shorter than the other, and she has been through so many terrible surgeries," Burns said. "This little girl was really mesmerized by the horses, so I said, 'You need to come out to my farm before you go home.' They followed up and came out. She was fascinated with Gee, and he loved her."

Both geldings are extensions of Burns – tireless ambassadors of the Thoroughbred. Dustin's Dreamer is more high profile, out and about at shows promoting the versatility of the breed. Garcon d'Or's stays home, but his generous temperament disproves the notion that ex-racehorses are untrainable hotheads.

"When you come into the barn, he's the one who is really friendly and so happy to see you," Burns said. "The average person knows very little about horses. Once they learn that Gee has a connection to Secretariat (broodmare sire Lion d'Or is by Secretariat out of 1970 Canadian Horse of the Year Fanfreluche) they don't even want to talk to Dreamer."

Garcon d'Or also has a particularly amusing quirk. When ridden, Burns said, he would constantly reach around to check out her feet in the stirrups, nuzzling her boots with his nose. And as soon as anyone enters his stall, he immediately drops his head to play with their shoes.

"He's completely obsessed with feet," she said. "But really, anytime anyone asks me if I'm interested in doing something to help promote Thoroughbreds, absolutely. Tell me what I can do and I'm happy to do it. If it's Thoroughbred-related, I'm all about it. That's my world."

In Memoriam

Maryland-bred Preemptive Strike, featured in this space in June 2024, died in December. The multiple steeplechase stakes winner and Maryland-bred champion was 27. The son of Roanoke won eight races, and placed in another 20, for owners Gail and Dixon Thayer and breeder Klo Carroll. ■

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— From the editor —

BY JOE CLANCY

Kentucky, Mid-Atlantic can work together

In November, The Jockey Club and the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association held a workshop for regional breeders' organizations in Louisville, Ky.

Also in November, Taylor Made Farm will reduce stud fees for four stallions to zero – ZERO – if your mare foals outside of Kentucky and the foal is registered with a state breed association.

In December, panelists at the University of Arizona's Global Symposium on Racing emphasized the need for multi-state cooperation to help stabilize Thoroughbred breeding in states with decreasing numbers.

Feeling noticed?

I guess Mid-Atlantic and other regional Thoroughbred breeders ought to appreciate the attention, but where is this going? Do national organizations and Kentucky farms really want to help regional Thoroughbred businesses? Do they see a need for healthy – if smaller – Thoroughbred states? If so, here's a short list of ways to help.

Decrease sire books.

The foal crop continues to decline nationally – and regionally – but major stallions keep breeding more mares. Ten stallions bred 200 or more mares in 2025 compared to four in 2015. In that time span, the foal crop decreased by 6,000 foals. Fewer horses, but more by the same sires. That's a race to the bottom nobody will win.

The Jockey Club tried to implement a mare cap of 140 several years ago, only to get thwarted by potential lawsuits from stallion farms and Kentucky's state legislators. I get it – free-market economy and all that – but any industry tied to the actual bloodlines of its most important ingredient ought to be able to see the potential for calamity here. Not only will the gene pool shrink, but fewer stallions will get opportunities to affect the gene pool.

How many people would have bred to Danzig in 1981 if the national leaders were attracting 200 mares apiece? Yes, he was by Northern Dancer. He'd also made just three starts – one in 1979 and two in 1980. He won all three, but none came in stakes and none were even a mile. His first crop included 32 named foals. In today's market, there may have been 15. And maybe 2-year-old champion Chief's Crown isn't one of them. Without those 32 foals, at a time when 40 mares was a big book, racing would have been deprived of one of its great pedigree influences.

Massive Kentucky stallion numbers filter through that state – concentrating mares to fewer mates on fewer farms –

but also roll on to regional markets where stallions struggle to find enough mares to get a foothold. The foal crops of Blofeld, now a Mid-Atlantic success, didn't go beyond 26 until his fifth season. Galawi (Ire) bred 22 mares in his first season. From 18 registered foals, 10 have started and four have won. That percentage makes him competitive with any freshman stallion in the country. Could he have sustained it with a bigger crop? No one will ever know.

Taylor Made's offer of free matings to Angel of Empire, Dr. Schivel, Idol and Tacitus is innovative, generous and something Mid-Atlantic breeders should consider. But the four aren't much more proven than regional alternatives. Pennsylvania-bred Angel of Empire's first foals arrive this year. Dr. Schivel's first foals are yearlings. Idol will have his first runners this year. And Tacitus is seven spots ahead of Galawi on the 2025 first-crop sire list with six times as many foals. I'd argue that moving a stallion to a regional farm for two seasons might help as much as a free mating. Maybe more.

Share the wealth.

Bring up revenue sharing in the horse business and get prepared to get hit with something. Maybe a rotten tomato or a "Socialist!" label. But Kentucky's windfall of purse money from historic horse racing machines would go a long way in regional states. At Turfway Park this winter, maiden special weight races carry purses of $100,000. In December, the track took entries for a "synthetic championships" card with $1.6 million in purses.

This will take a bigger math brain than mine, but there must be a way to spread that around to help elevate regional racing – while also helping Kentucky's industry realize benefits. Healthy racing in other states can only benefit the state that produces most of the horses in the nation.

Get together. This one is for people, associations and racetracks in the Mid-Atlantic.

Kentucky isn't going to save the Mid-Atlantic. The region needs to get proactive too. Virginia, Maryland and Delaware started it in 2025 with some crossover on racing schedules, restricted stakes eligibility and owner/breeder/stallion bonus programs, but a regional Thoroughbred incentive program sure sounds more solid than a state-by-state one. Nobody wants to say it out loud, but each state in the Mid-Atlantic faces an uncertain future when it comes to purses and bonuses tied to alternative gaming or state subsidies – from legislators, the public, casino companies, you name it.

Be creative. Be bold. Think beyond your state to support Thoroughbred breeding and racing in the Mid-Atlantic. Answer potential critics with innovation. Those University of Arizona panelists are correct. States outside of Kentucky need to work together and this region can drive that thinking. ■

The Followers

MID-ATLANTIC STALLIONS SOLDIER ON WITHOUT GREAT NOTION

by Joe Clancy

Maybe they don't need to know – pressure to perform and all that – but the stallions in the Mid-Atlantic have work to do.

Great Notion, Maryland's leading sire for the last eight years and the top sire in the region for the last four, was pensioned from stallion duty by Northview Stallion Station. A part of the Chesapeake City farm's stallion roster since 2005, he turns 26 this month, and his final crop arrives this year. He left an impact – fueled by progeny earnings approaching $50 million and regional stars such as Coastal Mission, Future Is Now, Witty, Anna's Bandit, Lewisfield, Talk Show Man, Jazzy Idea and others. The success rolled right on through to 2025 juvenile standouts Just Philtored, Slewperstitus and Big Cuddle and even the 2025 Maryland Horse Breeders Association yearling show champion.

Great Notion's retirement won't necessarily send dozens of mares to other stallions – Northview limited his book over the last several season – but 35 or so need a new mate and his absence will be felt.

"It's a big hole," said breeder Lizzie Merryman, who bought a lifetime breeding right after seeing her mare Runs Numbers' 2011 foal by the bay son of Elusive Quality.

"If you didn't have a share in him, you've had a hard time getting to him lately but saying that, it leaves a gaping hole in the Mid-Atlantic stallion ranks," said breeder and bloodstock advisor George Adams.

"Great Notion made us look smart, a lot smarter than we probably are," said breeder Eric Rizer, who sent two mares to the stallion for several years.

"There were some real question marks about him – we couldn't get fertility insurance on him, his race record was OK; it was an absolute gamble. . ." said breeder Dr. Tom Bowman, who vetted Great Notion for Northview in 2004. "He had small crops to start, people weren't particularly interested in him, and it took him several years to prove his quality, but for whatever reason his offspring have proved their merit."

"It could be years before somebody steps in to [fill his shoes]," said Rodney Eckenrode, who stands three stallions at Equistar Training and Breeding in Pennsylvania. "Maybe in five or six years we'll be having a different conversation. Those horses are hard to come by. He contributed to the breed."

While Great Notion gets a stall and a paddock at Northview for the rest of his life, his compatriots start breeding mares next month while trying to emulate him in a United States stallion climate dominated by Kentucky. The 2026 lineup includes Northview newcomer Post Time, Kentucky transplant Cross Traffic in Virginia, regional runner-up Cloud Computing, the climbing-the-ladder Blofeld, Maryland fixtures Uncle Lino, Golden Lad, Divining Rod and Mosler, and others at various levels and waypoints in their careers.

Regardless of your place in it, the stallion business demands patience and something of a gambler's mentality. The mares bred this year will foal in 2027. At the earliest, those foals won't race until spring/summer 2029. They will be 3-year-olds of 2030, which feels a long way off.

"The point of breeding to regional stallions is to play the long game," said Adams. "Breed to race. If you're planning to sell the foal, you're hoping to break even and hoping it's going to earn you breeder bonuses years down the road. I've bred plenty of Maryland-breds, and everyone knows the uncertainty of racing in Maryland, but they're still paying those bonuses. You can still have a Maryland-bred, Delaware-certified, Virginia-certified horse, get to the races in all of those states and collect those checks."

With large crops in the wings, Maryland stallion Blofeld may be on the brink of a breakthrough.

Stallion owners don't have it any easier.

"A regional farm either wants to own the stallion so they can collect the bonuses or stand a stallion that will come with a lot of mares they can board," Adams said. "Why are you going to spend the money it would take to bring a really attractive stallion prospect to the region? There are limited mares, people don't want to spend a lot of money on a stud fee and if he really hits, you're going to move him to Kentucky."

Not that farms stops trying. For all the uncertainty in the Thoroughbred industry, people still breed, raise, race, buy, sell and market future and present racehorses. The process often begins with a stallion choice and, collectively, regional stallions will cover several hundred mares this year. And mare owners have options.

The Heir Apparent?

Note the question mark. Nobody's stepping into Great Notion's role right away, but one still underexposed stallion could be on the verge of a breakthrough.

First, he brings a familiar pedigree. Murmur Farm's Blofeld is by Quality Road (a son of Great Notion's sire Elusive Quality) and from a Northern Dancer-line mare (like Great Notion).

"A lot of people who bred to him mentioned that because they couldn't get to Great Notion," said Murmur's Audrey Murray, who brought Blofeld to Maryland in time for the 2018 breeding season. "Some of the same horses are there."

Like Great Notion, Blofeld earned his way with success from small early crops. His first foals, born in 2019, went just

"Those guys did such a good job with that horse. Every time we lose that old blood, it's that much more concerning. Americans being trendy, they'll be fine but we need that old blood to preserve the bloodlines. He will greatly be missed."

– Rodney Eckenrode, about the impact of Great Notion's retirement

24 deep. Nineteen started, all winners. The percentages stayed high with crops two (26 foals, 24 runners, 20 winners) and three (24, 19, 17). A 2022 crop of just 20 foals includes nine winners from 15 runners. Those early returns helped attract mares, and Blofeld's crops have increased since. His fifth crop, 2-year-olds of 2025, consists of 53 registered foals. Twenty-two runners through Dec. 18 included nine winners led by December stakes winner Code of Silence. Similar-sized crops are on the ground and headed to the races. Blofeld covered 96 mares in 2025, and Murray expects to play in the same ballpark this year.

She and her late husband Allen built Murmur, in Darlington, Md., on the backs of stallions Our Emblem, Deerhound, Norquestor, Louis Quatorze and others. Blofeld more than fits on the list.

"I couldn't believe people weren't breeding to him in the beginning with his pedigree and his race record," said Murray. "Most of those early mares were not top mares and they won. Every horse in that first crop won. Then we started to get more interest and here he is."

Blofeld's female family goes way back in the region as his first three dams – Storm Minstrel, Colonial Minstrel and Minstrella – were bred in Virginia by Ned Evans. A stakes winner in New York, Storm Minstrel sold to Keats-Grove Farm in 2011 (a year after Evans died) while carrying Blofeld. The colt sold at auction as a weanling, yearling and 2-year-old – the last for $225,000 – and won three Grade 2 stakes for Glencrest Farm and JSM Equine. The statistics and success matter, but Murray credits Blofeld for other important traits.

"He's kind," she said. "The offspring are easy to work with, but he himself is very kind and good to work with. He's a perfect stallion. The kind you want to have. It was hard the first few years with him, we worked so hard to get mares, and then people started to notice him a little bit."

Blofeld's top runners include stakes winners Beach Daze, Charming Way, Johnyz From Albany, Miss Harriett and others.

Adams didn't hesitate to name Blofeld as the region's most likely follow-up to Great Notion.

"It kind of has to be him for what's out there right now," he said. "His percentages are still the best in the region, he's covered huge books the last three or four years now and the mare quality only goes up for the next handful of crops. Great Notion wasn't covering as many mares, who else was going to pick up those mares? There's nobody else out there that's gotten enough mares to throw their hat into the ring for this."

The New Guy

While not the only first-year stallion in the region for 2026, Post Time monopolizes the attention.

For starters, his race record – 12 wins, eight in stakes, a Grade 3 win, a Grade 2 win, three Grade 1 placings and $1,498,705 in earnings – rivals that of any recent regional stallion. Second, he's something of a local hero as a Maryland-bred who won 11 races in the state for Hillwood Stable. Third, the son of Frosted married all that with a showman's personality complete with hind-legs-only walks to the track at Fair Hill, Laurel Park, Saratoga, Del Mar and anywhere else he traveled.

Hillwood owner Ellen Charles sent Maryland-based Grade 3 winner Bandbox to Northview after his racing career ended in 2014, but the son of Tapit died in 2021. Post Time, a grandson of Tapit, looks to expand on the concept at a $4,000 stud fee after one final stakes start planned by trainer Brittany Russell in December.

"We've had steady interest from people asking when he's coming," said Northview's Paul O'Loughlin, who mentioned a January open house for breeders. "The first day we announced him we did a bunch of contracts. He raced all the way through age 5, that's a positive, he won at 6 furlongs to a mile-and-an-eighth, he showed up in big races. There's a lot to like."

Though he won the General George-G3 and Carter-G2 in 2024, Post Time's most notable races were seconds in the Metropolitan Handicap-G1 and Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile-G1, and a third in the Whitney-G1, that year. If any of those were wins, he might be in Kentucky.

BARRIE REIGHTLER

Millionaire Maryland-bred Post Time retires to his home state's Northview Stallion Station.

Post Time's Maryland-bred dam Vielsalm won seven races and placed in the 2016 Gallorette-G3 at Pimlico Race Course for co-breeder Brooke Bowman. Vielsalm's sire Fairbanks won't make anyone forget *Princequillo, but the immediate female family includes stakes winners Undercover, My Magician and Bye Bye J, Grade 1 winners that include Rose's Cantina, Fancy Naskra and Montreal Red, and a host of winners.

"His female family has plenty of black-type horses," said Adams, who owns a mare from the family he'll send to Essential Quality in hopes of mimicking the cross that produced Post Time. "It's a nice family, a local family, there's plenty for people to like and get behind. Like with all stallions, it's going to take a few years before we know."

Hoping to capture some of the Northview magic they realized with Great Notion, Rizer and his wife Nancy invested in Post Time and will send a mare this year.

"They called us and said they appreciate the support we've given them," said Eric. "It was a no-brainer. We like supporting the Maryland breeding program."

Merryman – whose Great Notion homebred Witty is closing in on $1 million in earnings – will breed three mares this year, which makes choosing a first-year stallion over one with more of a track record difficult.

"There are so many first-year stallions that go to stud and don't make it, so it's kind of hard to bet on them," she said. "It will be interesting to see how he does though. You get so much value in Kentucky, but it's also nice to have the state-bred and

BARRIE REIGHTLER

Uncle Lino (left) and Golden Lad look to attract mares at Northview.

state-sired programs behind you. I prefer to breed to the best horse I can breed to no matter what he's eligible for. With Great Notion I felt like I was doing that."

Of course, somebody sent mares to Great Notion in his first year, and that turned out OK. O'Loughlin hopes to attract 80 mares to the gray, who will get support from Northview owners Michael Golden and Lisa Hofstetter.

"I'd have said 100 a few years ago, but there aren't as many mares around now," he said. "I've done the math in my head a little bit so let's say 80. That's a good start for a first-year horse."

The Not So New Guys

In the Northview barn with Great Notion, Uncle Lino and Golden Lad look to fill the coming void without Blofeld's momentum or Post Time's buzz. They possess the statistics and breeders' opinions to attract mares – with a boost from fee reductions to $1,500 on Uncle Lino and $2,500 on Golden Lad.

A son of Uncle Mo, Uncle Lino got a December boost when 2-year-old Lino Padrino won his debut in Dubai. The New Jersey-bred sold for $200,000 at Fasig-Tipton Midlantic's May sale and could be stakes bound in 2026. Nature's Candy won a Pennsylvania-bred stakes in October. West Virginia-bred Maggie's Girl won on West Virginia Breeders Classic night. Maryland-bred Cluck Cluck won four in 2025, with seven seconds, in 12 starts (through mid-December). Pennsylvania-bred Crab Daddy came within a head of beating future Maryland Million Classic winner Barbadian Runner a year ago. Pennsylvania-bred Jean Valjean won a stakes in 2024 and flashed enough ability for Merryman that she'd consider sending a mare.

"If I was going to breed one mare regionally it would probably be to Uncle Lino," she said. "They're very talented and have a lot of speed."

Golden Lad's first runners came in 2019, a year ahead of Uncle Lino, and included eight-time stakes winner Hello Beautiful. Caprice won six races as a 2-year-old in 2024 for Pennsylvania breeders Greg and Caroline Bentley. Maryland-bred Takethemoneyhoney, out of a Great Notion mare, has won four of six with two seconds, was a stakes winner at Monmouth in May, and was beaten a head in a stakes at Laurel in November in her return.

The Rizers have supported the son of Medaglia d'Oro, and liked the results.

"Is he going to be the one?" Eric asked about a successor to Great Notion. "He just wasn't on the level of Great Notion, but he's solid and maybe this is his chance."

Country Life Farm stallions Mosler and Divining Rod are in similar positions, though they're behind the Northview duo in terms of runners and crops on the way to the races. A son of War Front, Mosler started 2025 with two stakes wins and two graded-stakes placings by son Quint's Brew, who was on the comeback trail for trainer Ned Allard, and finished it with two winners on Maryland Million Day 2025. He had 14 percent stakes horses per starters during the year. Divining Rod sired three stakes winners, including juveniles Magic Wallet and Divine Intentions, and his daughter Next Girl won a $100,000 race on the Claiming Crown card at Churchill Downs in November, her seventh lifetime score.

ELLEN B. PONS (2)

Mosler (left) and Divining Rod are fixtures at Maryland's Country Life Farm.

Anchor and Hope Farm's Bourbon Courage and Country Life's Friesan Fire, both graded stakes sires, looked like they could muscle into the regional stallion picture for a time, but their mare numbers have declined.

The Arrivals

Kentucky transplants have been part of the regional stallion market for years and the 2026 season will be no different. Cloud Computing stands his third season at Pennsylvania's Pin Oak Lane Farm. The son of Maclean's Music arrived with big crops behind him and has been a fixture near the top of the regional standings since. Late in 2025, he led all regional stallions with 170 runners and 100 winners while second to Great Notion in progeny earnings.

Cloud Computing bred 33 mares in 2025, after getting 45 in 2024. He stands for $3,500 and is represented by a dozen stakes winners including Pennsylvania-bred Grade 2 winner I'm Very Busy.

LOUISE RENEGAL

Classic winner Cloud Computing continues to carve a prominent place in the Pennsylvania stallion rankings.

Cupid, who moved to Maryland for the 2024 season, bred identical books of 52 mares in his first two seasons at Atlanta Hall Farm. Like Cloud Computing, the son of Tapit was buoyed by big early crops and his progeny includes champions Casta Diva and God of Love, in Puerto Rico and Canada, respectively, and Grade 1 winner Carson's Run, multiple New York stakes winner Sterling Silver and Grade 2 winner Desert Dawn, all millionaires. Atlanta Hall's Gary Murray said early opinions on the gray horse's first Maryland-bred foals have been positive.

"Everybody who has a foal, we've only had foals born in Maryland, seems to love the ones they have," Murray said. "I have six or seven in the field and I don't have a bad one in the batch. Great Notion, what an amazing stallion, but there's a battle going on in Maryland for second with Uncle Lino, Cupid and Golden Lad. That's a healthy thing when you have stallions behind a horse like Great Notion. I hope I win, but that's a good thing. They are decent, hard-knocking stallions."

Murray looks forward to the day Cupid's Maryland-sired foals race in the region, but for now follows the feats of Casta Diva, Puerto Rico's 2024 Horse of the Year, Indiana-bred standout Cupid's Runaway and Louisiana-bred 2-year-old filly Thrill Seeker who placed in a stakes in her second start after winning in November.

COURTESY OF ATLANTA HALL FARM

The snow-loving Cupid nears his third season at Maryland's Atlanta Hall Farm.

> "If you have a horse like Blofeld, it works. If you don't, it's hard. And it was hard the first few years with him. We worked so hard to get mares . . . Then people started to notice him a little bit. I'm getting a lot of action."
>
> *– Murmur Farm's Audrey Murray, about the stallion business*

"They're nice horses," Murray said. "Sometimes they need a bit of time, but if you give them that time, they stay around forever. We'd like to have representation at the local tracks where we stand, but that will come in time. Hopefully we're looking at it in a few years."

Cupid's co-owner Tony Mills died in December at age 60, leaving Murray with questions about the future and – more importantly – an absent friend.

"He got great joy in following Cupid and the progeny," said Murray, who attended the 2025 Maryland Million with Mills. "He loved the game and was only getting going. It's devastating, but that's what life throws at you sometimes."

For years, John Funkhouser pondered the idea of bringing a proven sire to the region – specifically Virginia – and made good on the concept with the arrival of Cross Traffic for 2026. The former Spendthrift Farm stallion – North America's leading freshman sire of 2018 – will stand at Mt. Airy Farm in Millwood while hoping to capitalize on momentum in the state.

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"With everything that Virginia's doing, it's obvious they're one of the states that's growing," said Funkhouser, whose family has owned and operated O'Sullivan Farms in West Virginia since 1939. "Purses are up, the meet at Colonial Downs is growing, Virginia-restricted races are out there. I'm really excited to bring these bloodlines to the state and the region."

Champion 2-year-old filly Jaywalk was part of Cross Traffic's first crop, and he has also sired major winners Neecie Marie, Maple Leaf Mel, Ny Traffic (who stands in Pennsylvania), Here Mi Song and Defining Purpose. Jaywalk's success helped fuel a huge crop of 129 foals born in 2020, but his popularity declined with competition at Spendthrift and other Kentucky farms.

Funkhouser thinks a move can help change that.

"Proven horses like Cross Traffic are dismissed when they're Grade 1 producers and good stallions," he said. "It's a funny market we're in right now and a lot of these older, proven stallions go by the wayside. He was one of a handful I would love to move over here. Young horses are getting all the attention, not rightfully so because they haven't proven anything yet."

Funkhouser had to get creative to find a spot for Cross Traffic, who will be the first stallion to stand at the Mt. Airy property owned by Bridget Overcash. Mares will board at O'Sullivan and be shipped the 25 minutes or so to be bred. Cliff and Laura Robbins, who run a breaking/training farm adjacent to Mt. Airy, will handle Cross Traffic's day-to-day care.

"I have a farm in Virginia, more of a cattle property that I wouldn't want to stand a stallion at," said Funkhouser. "I reached out to Bridget, talked her through it, she came over and saw my farm and was much more at ease about it all. She has pleasure horses so it's different for her. It's a beautiful little farm."

Cross Traffic spent his first few months in the region at O'Sullivan and was slated to move to Mt. Airy – once the home of the influential historic racehorse and stallion Sir Archy – in February. Funkhouser planned an open house for Feb. 7.

SPENDTHRIFT FARM

Newcomer Cross Traffic joins the ranks in Virginia.

The Wild Cards

Play stallion round-robin for a minute (or 12), the next Great Notion might not be one of the more familiar names mentioned so far. He might be a horse you've hardly even considered.

Well, consider away.

Northview stallions Engage and Galawi (Ire) exceeded expectations in their first seasons with runners – even finding spots among the top 25 freshmen sires in North America. Backed by 41 foals in his first crop, Engage produced six winners from 21 runners through Dec. 18. The son of Into Mischief got a win and two stakes placings from Vita Mia and two wins from horses out of Great Notion mares. Galawi's first crop only went to 18, but included 10 runners and four winners. Daughter Ginger Snap finished third in the Maryland Million Lassie and won a maiden special weight in late October for the Rizers.

If those Northview stallions aren't far enough outside the box, consider their coworker First Mondays. The son of Curlin's first three crops include just 28 foals. Seventeen have started, 11 are winners, three are stakes performers. That success was enough to move him into the farm's marketing and get some attention. He'll stand for $1,000 in 2025, another arrow in the quiver for O'Loughlin when talking to mare owners.

"He's on the roster for real now, he's earned it," said O'Loughlin. "The horse has been successful. Horses like him help me."

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COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Pennsylvania stallion Zozos leans on a race record that included a victory in the Grade 3 Ack Ack Stakes at Churchill Downs.

Bred in Maryland by Tom and Chris Bowman and Milton Higgins III, First Mondays has been turning heads since his earliest days. He sold for $450,000 to Chuck Zacney as a Timonium yearling in 2016 – top price of the sale – added Jim Dresher's Glenangus Farm as a partner and won his first two starts for trainer John Servis in summer 2018 at Gulfstream Park and followed with a third in the Grade 3 Smarty Jones. Four losses followed and he was retired with ankle problems.

"He's a son of a Curlin, there are a million of them; he showed some promise, there are a million of them; he didn't have the personality to be a riding horse or a lead pony," said Tom Bowman. "It came down to a decision to try to capitalize on his potential and his pedigree and see if we could make something out of nothing."

Focusing on mares who showed soundness and durability, Bowman tried to make First Mondays a stallion at the family's Roland Farm in Chesapeake City. During the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We found out we couldn't handle the job," Bowman said. "It was difficult to have enough employees on the farm; it was difficult to convince people to travel. We bred four mares to him, and I was pretty much out of answers."

For 2021, Northview's David Wade offered to board First Mondays, handle the matings, keep costs low. Bowman recruited mares, saw the stallion's three foals and kept working at it. First Mondays bred 29 mares in 2021 and followed up with 16 in 2022.

"Without Northview I was dead in the water," Bowman said. "All they've done is be the most cooperative group you can imagine. It's the sort of stuff people don't do for each other. The responsibility for his success lies at least partly with Northview's gesture of friendship."

And the horse, whose offspring include five-time winner Blue Kingdom (an Aqueduct allowance winner in November and third in the Maryland Million Classic) and flat and hurdle winner Starlifter, both first-crop stakes-placed runners, and stakes-placed juvenile winner Lundi Loot.

"I don't know," said Bowman about how far the horse could climb. "It's not whether he's proven he has some merit at this point, it's how many mares are there and where do people find a path to him? A lot of the people we talk to now talk about how expensive it is. Well, an inexpensive stallion with this kind of potential would be a significant draw and now he's at least something people will recognize."

Beau Ridge Farm

244 Tel Farm Lane
Kearneysville, WV 25430
Cyndy McKee 304-995-8930

Cancun

Son of leading sire **INTO MISCHIEF** (Harlan's Holiday). Half to G3 **SO PERFECT** ($548,435) out of HOPEOVEREXPERIENCE (Songandaprayer), a half-sister to G2 **COWTOWN CAT** (sire). Deep family of sires: G2 **BARBERSTOWN**, G3 **DEWAN KEYS**, G3 **JOKER**, etc. First crop runs in 2026.

Last Print

Won Charles Town's 4½ furlong Gold Watch Overnight S in :51.77, third WV Dash for Cash Breeders Classic S. Son of leading WV sire **FIBER SONDE** (Unbridled's Song). Out of a winning half-sister to G3 LAWN RANGER and GEORGIE'S ANGEL (G1 producer). Family of 2YO champion ADA PROSPECT, G2 EXCAPER ($775,360), etc. Sire of allowance winner First Print in his first crop.

Redirect

Sire of multiple stakes winners **DIRECT THE CAT** ($251,750) and **IM THE DIRECTOR** ($221,642), etc. Son of leading sire **SPEIGHTSTOWN** (Gone West). Out of MSW **ALTERNATE** ($550,695). Half to G1 millionaire **HIGHER POWER** (sire), G2 millionaire **ALTERNATION** (sire), and MSW **INTERRUPTED**. Dam a half to Canadian HOY and leading sire **PEAKS AND VALLEYS**.

Spiritus Invictus

Sire of four winners from two small crops to race. Son of leading sire and sire of sires **WAR FRONT**. Out of G1 **CENTRE COURT** (Smart Strike), winner of $961,048. Half to G3 **NAVRATILOVA**. Second dam G2 **LET** ($604,020). From a solid family of sires: **JOYEUX DANSEUR, NOVERRE, ARAZI, AJDAL, FORMIDABLE**, etc.

Beau Ridge stallions stand for $1,000 LFSN and are registered WV stallions and nominated to WV Breeders Classics

Equistar welcomes the first foals from Zozos, who bred 38 mares in 2025. The son of Munnings won seven races, earned $1 million on the racetrack and keeps Eckenrode thinking positively.

"He bred some really nice mares so he's going to get some good opportunities," Eckenrode said. "He proved he looks the part and he ran the part. Now he's got to prove he can get horses that look the part. I was happy with the mares we got and the number; there just aren't many mares around or people who have mares."

Equistar also stands 25-year-old Hall of Famer Smarty Jones and the Giant's Causeway horse Brody's Cause, whose books included 10 and 13 mares in 2025. Brody's Cause sired 45 winners in 2025 (through Dec. 18), third among active sires in Pennsylvania.

"I thought about another horse, but there's just not enough mares," Eckenrode said. "We're all fighting over the same mares and I have a return client base that has 60 or 70 mares we breed every year. We'd just be moving them from one horse to another."

West Virginia stallion Barbados got a huge boost from Maryland-bred star Barbadian Runner in 2025, news Ronney Brown hopes translates to even more mares in 2026. Far from a one-horse wonder, Barbados was up to 17 winners (from just 19 runners) on the year and was third in the state – behind Juba and Fiber Sonde – by progeny earnings with nearly $1.5 million. The son of Speightstown stood at Maryland's Shamrock Farm in 2024, but was in limbo (and Kentucky) until Brown connected with owner Paul Hanifl late in the year. The move to Pellinor Lane Farm, owned by Brown and his wife Nicole, resulted in 20 mares bred in 2025.

"With the success he's had it should be better this year," said Brown, who co-owns the horse with Hanifl. "Barbadian Runner helps tremendously, but to know you're going to get a solid racehorse to run is a big positive. He's correct, stands up good, gets versatile horses. He's never had a bad day."

Stallion Notes: O'Sullivan didn't leave its West Virginia operation alone, adding former Florida stallion **Curlin's Honor** (who raced for West Virginian Mike Hall's Breeze Easy operation) to the roster that includes Aldrin and My Prankster for 2026. "It'll be wonderful for Charles Town," said Funkhouser. "He won on dirt, all-weather, long, turf, but in reality we're going to push the fact that he ran fast multiple times. He was a speedball and that's what you need at Charles Town, sprinters." The newcomer is part of a shuffling of the deck at the farm. Limehouse has been retired. Capo Bastone moved to Ohio. **Golden Years** will be limited to select

West Virginia stallion Barbados rides a wave of success from son Barbadian Runner.

O'Sullivan mares because of a hock injury. **My Prankster's** first foals are yearlings of 2026. The son of Into Mischief attracted 46 mares in 2024 and 53 last year . . . Murmur stallion **Warrant** bred 38 mares in 2025 and gets a boost from his sire Constitution, whose sons at stud include Tiz the Law, Americanrevolution, Independence Hall and first-year stallion Mindframe. At $4,500 live foal, Warrant is the least expensive and the only one in the region . . . Veteran Pennsylvania stallion **Weigelia** continues to post strong numbers with three stakes winners and average earnings per runner of $38,263 in 2025. WynOaks Farm stands the 25-year-old, who covered six mares in 2025, and his son **Beren**, who covered 16 . . . Former Kentucky stallion **Enticed**, part of a big roster at Pennsylvania's Mountain Springs Farm, stands his second season in the state after covering 66 mares last year and owner Ralph Santella hopes to approach that number again. "The good thing is he's been throwing runners," said Santella, whose stakes-producing mare Doubleclickdamouse was expecting an Enticed foal in 2026. "He's getting maiden special weight winners and allowance winners. That helps." Enticed led all third-crop sires in the region with 63 winners from 102 runners through Dec. 18. He's joined at Mountain Springs by **Beverly Park, Eastwood, Ny Traffic, Uptowncharlybrown** and Mid-Atlantic transplants **Max Player** and **Fugitive**. . . Northview's **Endorsed**, a half-brother to Horse of the Year and $60,000 stallion Cody's Wish, bred 87 mares over his first two seasons. ■

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"NY Traffic showed speed to win stakes sprinting, but carried it around two turns as well to show his versatility at Grade 1 level."

Saffie Joseph Jr., Trainer

$3,500 LFSN

Cross Traffic–Mamie Reilly (Graeme Hall)

Inquiries to **John Fanelli 856-981-4441**
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Standing at
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Girl Power

MARYLAND-BRED FILLY SCORES FOR BAILES AT CLAIMING CROWN

By Paul Halloran ■ Photographs by Coady Media

Next Girl could be the poster child – or pin-up girl – for what the Claiming Crown is all about.

The Maryland-bred filly was barely eligible for the $100,000 Glass Slipper at Churchill Downs Nov. 21, a race for fillies and mares who had run for a claiming price of $12,500 or less in 2024 or 2025. You had to go back 19 races on her running lines to see that on Jan. 12, 2024, the daughter of Divining Rod ran in a $12,500 maiden claimer at Laurel.

"She got to sputtering a little bit on us as an early 3-year-old, which worked out for us at the end because she was eligible for the Claiming Crown," said winning Maryland-based trainer Robbie Bailes. "We had no thoughts of it at that time, but she got really good toward the end of that year."

Konrad Wayson bought Next Girl, out of Fleet and Fancy and bred by Country Life Farm and the Fleet and Fancy broodmare partnership, for $20,000 as a weanling at the 2021 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic December mixed sale. She lost her first three races, run during the last two months of 2023, by a combined 23 lengths before Bailes entered her for $12,500, a race she won by 13½ lengths and was not claimed.

"At that time, you had no idea what you had," said Wayson, a member of the Maryland Racing Commission. "You run them where you think they have an ability to win. She just kept going down the ranks and all of a sudden woke up. Somebody would have had a hell of a claim at $12,500. I'm glad we kept her."

What Wayson and Wade Meadows – who race as WWCD LLC (Winner Winner Chicken Dinner – seriously) – have now is a filly with seven wins and more than $255,000 heading into an allowance at Laurel Dec. 19. In addition to qualifying under the conditions, she earned her way into the Claiming Crown by winning a $50,000 race on preview day at Colonial Downs Aug. 21.

"The people at Colonial said, 'This qualifies you for the Claiming Crown.' We were like, 'OK. That's nice,' " Wayson said. "But then we started thinking about it and I thought we had a shot, so let's go."

It was Wayson's first start as an owner under the twin spires and only the second time 36-year veteran trainer Bailes shipped a horse to Louisville. Bailes, whose Scrappy T ran second to Afleet Alex in an eventful Preakness Stakes-G1 in 2005, finished seventh at Churchill with Lion Down by Me in 2013.

"This trip home was a lot shorter," he said.

Bailes had taken a big swing with Next Girl in her previous race, the Maryland Million Distaff at Laurel Oct. 11. Despite finishing sixth behind Onyx Ten, she looked good on paper in the Claiming Crown and was the 5-1 fourth choice on the morning line.

"We looked at the nominations and we had beaten the favorite [Mercy Warren]" Bailes said. "I just thought it was a real even race. Having [jockey] Jose Ortiz didn't hurt my feelings, either. Hats off to him. He rode a hell of a race. I wasn't sure, being that close up, going that fast early, but those horses kept going."

Ortiz had Next Girl second behind Sadie the Goat through a quarter-mile in :22.48 and a half-mile in :44.91. She put her head in front at the eighth pole and prevailed in a stretch

Next Girl (11) prevails in a tight photo to win the Glass Slipper on the Claiming Crown card at Churchill Downs in November.

duel by a nose, picking up the $58,280 winner's share of the $103,967 purse. She and Sadie the Goat were 8¼ lengths clear of Pink Rose in third.

"You see them coming down the stretch and you think the horse is going to pull away, and all of a sudden the other horse is fighting back in just a heck of a stretch duel," Wayson said. "She came out a nose in front instead of a nose behind. It was fabulous."

Not bad for a $20,000 purchase.

"Every now and then you get lucky," said Wayson, who remembers piling into the back of a station wagon to go to Charles Town to see horses run for his father, Morgan Wayson Jr., whose graded stakes winner Thirty Eight Paces ran fourth in the 1981 Preakness for legendary trainer King Leatherbury.

"That's why you're in the game, right? Sometimes you get lucky," Wayson said. "We were at the sale looking to buy horses, and we rely on Robbie's expert opinion. He said, 'This looks like a good one. Let's buy her.' So we did."

Fleet and Fancy raced just once for her breeder Stonerside Stable, but packs plenty of pedigree onto a catalog page as a half-sister to 2-year-old champion and sire Midshipman, Grade 2 winner Fast Cookie (the dam of Grade 1 winner and sire Frosted), stakes winner Regal Marina and Surf Song (the dam of Grade 1 winner and sire Solomini). All are out of the California-bred mare Fleet Lady, who won 10 races and earned $631,190 for Golden Eagle Farm.

Purchased by Maryland owner/breeder Howard Bender as a broodmare for $180,000 in 2007, Fleet and Fancy produced foals as early as 2007 (by Mr. Greeeley) and as late as 2024 (Bullsbay). Bender's Glade Valley Farm sold her for $20,000 in 2016 and she nearly went to the Middle East, but export issues scotched that plan and she was sold to Country Life as a proven mare for less-proven stallions Super Ninety Nine, Mosler and Divining Rod.

A daughter of Touch Gold, her foals include eight winners, topped by Next Girl and 12-time winner Fleet Gold Digger.

Daughter Addison Run (by Unbridled's Song) produced graded stakes horses Final Jeopardy and Gouverneur Morris, while another daughter Fancy Love (Not For Love) produced 2025 stakes-winning juvenile and $1.7 million sales horse Romeo. Entered in the same 2021 sale as Next Girl, Fleet and Fancy sold to West Virginia breeders Ronney and Nicole Brown while in foal to Divining Rod. Her 2022 colt did not make it to the races and, after producing a 2024 Bullsbay filly, Fleet and Fancy was retired.

"She was a nice mare who had a great page and got runners," said Country Life's Christy Holden. "Her Divining Rod foals were beautiful, and Next Girl has been a nice surprise."

"She was a nice mare who had a great page and got runners. Her Divining Rod foals were beautiful, and Next Girl has been a nice surprise."

–Country Life Farm's Christy Holden, about Fleet and Fancy

ELLEN B. PONS

Next Girl hints at a bright future as a weanling at Country Life Farm in 2021.

JOHN GALLAGHER / COADY MEDIA

Pennsylvania-bred Concrete Glory wins his 17th race in the Ready's Rocket Express.

Wayson has two broodmares, including Girls Got Rhythum, whose first foal is stakes-placed $348,165-earner Mattitude (by Great Notion), whom Wayson lost at the claim box. WWCD owns stakes-placed New York-bred gelding Grand Opening, who has earned $264,950 in 10 starts.

"It's one of those things," Wayson said of racehorse ownership. "It can be expensive at times, but very rewarding."

CROWN POINTS: Claiming Crown XXVIII, a partnership between the National Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association and Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, offered $1.1 million in purses to connections for whom it is their Breeders' Cup. In the feature race, the $225,000 Claiming Crown Jewel, Parx-based trainer Ben Dunn made it 5-for-6 in his fledgling career when **Double Your Money** closed from eighth to win by 1¼ lengths and pick up $127,840. By Demarchelier (GB), the gelding owned by the trainer in partnership with Chris Mancusi has three wins and six seconds in nine starts at Parx, including a second in the Grade 3 Greenwood Cup on the Pennsylvania Derby card. "I got so excited and nervous after the race that I got sick," Dunn said of the Jewel win. "It means the world to me to run a horse here. This horse doesn't stop running."

Pennsylvania-bred **Concrete Glory** defended his title in the $102,000 Ready's Rocket Express to add $60,140 to career earnings that reached $519,874. It was the 17th win for the now 7-year-old Bodemeister gelding out of Take It Inside (by Disco Rico) bred by Kyle Horlacher and the Bodemeister Syndicate. Since being claimed by Saffie Joseph for Big Frank Stable for $6,250 at Gulfstream in December 2022, the horse has reeled off 11 wins in 18 starts.

"He broke so well and really traveled nicely on the lead," jockey Irad Ortiz Jr. said. "I just let him do his thing and he finished up for me." Making his first start off a 126-day layoff, Concrete Glory improved his lifetime record to 39-17-6-2.

Curlin's Malibu, who made 34 of his 41 starts in Maryland, at Charles Town and Colonial Downs, won the Iron Horse/Kent Stirling Memorial worth $109,914. The son of Curlin made 24 starts for Charles Town-based owner/trainer William Atkins before joining the stable of Jeanine M. Cumiskey and trainer Joe Sharp last summer. He was a qualifier race winner at Colonial Downs on preview day in August. ■

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The Steeplechase Times

End of an Era

CHAMPION SNAP DECISION RETIRES TO LIFE AS A FOXHUNTER

By Joe Clancy

Want to put the racing career of steeplechase champion Snap Decision into perspective? Consider two facts:

None of the 11 other horses who started in his debut, at Belmont Park in October 2016, raced in 2025.

None of the seven other horses who started in his career finale, at Far Hills in October 2025, were alive in 2016.

All the other details – 17 wins over hurdles, 15 stakes victories, five Grade 1 triumphs, a record-tying nine-race winning streak, an Eclipse Award in 2024, $1,258,150 in steeplechase earnings, six wins carrying 160 pounds or more – matter, but those two points about the now 12-year-old Hard Spun gelding's longevity drive home the impact.

A National Steeplechase Association fixture for seven seasons, he exits as an all-time great for owners Mike Hankin, Charlie Fenwick and Charlie Noell, trainer Jack Fisher and dozens of others close –and not so close –to him.

He retires one year early as NSA rules permit horses to race over hurdles at 12, but not 13. In his four-start final season, he finished with a win, a second and $126,650 earned. He finished fourth in that final race, the American Grand National-G1 Oct. 18. The career earnings figure ranks second all-time, between McDynamo and Good Night Shirt. Both are members of Thoroughbred racing's Hall of Fame. Snap Decision will get considered in five years' time, by which point the run may have sunk in for his people.

"We would have loved to have seen him catch McDynamo, but that's OK," said Hankin. "Will we ever own another horse like him? We'll see. I don't know. He really embodied what Bruton Street was about, which is three friends getting together to own and enjoy racehorses. He's done everything we've asked of him."

He made five starts in the historic Temple Gwathmey Handicap-G2, a race dating to 1924, and came away with a record four wins (2021, 2023, 2024, 2025) and a second (2022). He also went postward five times in the Iroquois-G1, first run in 1941, winning a record-tying three (2021, 2022, 2024) and placing second twice (2023, 2025). The 2021 score there matched Thrice Worthy's North American steeplechase record of nine consecutive wins.

Snap Decision was undefeated in four hurdle starts at Saratoga – a 38½-length allowance win in 2019, two novice stakes triumphs in 2020 and a 13¼-length demolition job in the 2022 Jonathan Sheppard-G1 while carrying 164 pounds. New York Racing Association age rules prohibited him from competing there in 2024 and 2025.

The Eclipse Award runner-up after the 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 seasons, he broke through with a victory after his 2024 campaign. His 10-year-old season included spring wins in the Gwathmey and Iroquois and an October triumph (by a neck) over Irish raider Galvin (Ire) in the Grand National. Bred in Kentucky by Phipps Stable, Snap Decision received 182 of the 193 first-place votes cast.

Though he pursued a different path than his ancestors, Snap Decision was somewhat destined for greatness. His dam, the Unbridled mare Salute, placed in two graded stakes and produced Grade 1 winner Mr Speaker and Grade 3 winner Vigilantes Way. Granddam Personal Ensign won all 13 starts, received an Eclipse Award as champion older female of 1988, earned $1,679,880 and was inducted to racing's Hall of Fame.

As a broodmare, she produced Grade 1 flat winners My Flag, Miner's Mark and Traditionally, plus Our Emblem, sire of Kentucky Derby winner War Emblem. Personal Ensign's dam Grecian Banner was a Broodmare of the Year. Her dam *Dorine was a champion in Argentina.

For Hall of Fame trainer Shug McGaughey, Snap Decision finished fifth in his debut in 2016, won two of nine in 2017 – twice knocking heads with future Horse of the Year Bricks and Mortar, and placing in the Grade 3 Palm Beach Stakes at Gulfstream Park. As a 4-year-old, Snap Decision couldn't get over the two-other-than allowance hump and lost all eight starts.

He sold to Maryland-based Bruton Street, a top owner on the jump circuit, and Fisher late that year.

"My first impression was that he was good, but I didn't think he was that good," Fisher said. "We were lucky that the Phippses accepted the offer. He was a pretty good flat horse, he just wasn't making a living at their level."

CAROL FENWICK

Co-owner Charlie Fenwick introduced Snap Decision to a possible next career at a Green Spring Valley Hounds meet in the champion's new backyard Dec. 6.

He more than did so over jumps and will get a chance at a third career as he left Fisher's barn to join Fenwick's string of foxhunters. Snap Decision found a place at the new headquarters.

"He's a bigger-than-life individual, and maybe I knew that, but I don't think I'd experienced it," Fenwick said in mid-December. "I was a one-third owner of him for years and that's about it. I got the win photos, watched him run, appreciated what he did, but I didn't know all that much about him. He took us everywhere as a racehorse and we were so fortunate, but to see all that turn into this – as a possible hunter for 77-year-old me – is amazing."

Snap Decision has been for rides in the country, jumped logs and joined fellow 12-year-old Corky Lemon, a West Virginia-bred gelding who won the first hurdle race of Snap Decision's career in 2019, before switching to timber and finding his way to Fenwick's.

On Dec. 6, members of the Green Spring Valley Hounds out for a Saturday fixture were treated to a celebrity appearance by the champion.

"He didn't hunt, he went to the meet, and he was fine until he saw about 30 hounds," said Fenwick of the introduction. "He hadn't seen anything quite like that before. That sort of shook him up. He was alert, didn't miss a thing, wasn't aggressive, but he wasn't walking around on a loose rein either. He couldn't have been more pleasant."

After the orientation session, and more than a few "Is that?" looks from fellow riders, Fenwick took the bay home and hunted another former Bruton Street runner Espoir de Loire (Fr). A former trainer and amateur jockey who won the Maryland Hunt Cup five times, Fenwick hopes to take Snap Decision out for real before the season ends in April. There's no hurry, and there's no doubt who is dictating the progression.

"He could end up being a perfectly fine hunter, we don't know quite yet," Fenwick said. "My hope is that by the end of the season he keeps progressing and he's out with hounds, but there's no rush at all. We're all very fortunate to be around him." ■

The Steeplechase Times

25 for '25

RECORD PURSES HIGHLIGHT AMERICAN STEEPLECHASE SEASON

By Sean Clancy ■ *Photographs by Tod Marks*

There's no way the National Steeplechase Association season would work on Strava. Too many twists and turns, though the map would be fun to look at afterward. The run starts with jogging roads in the winter and schooling sessions on farms all over the Mid-Atlantic, shifts to van rides in all directions to races in nine states over eight months.

The 2025 season set a record for total purses, featured the retirement of a champion, showcased an undefeated timber star and crowned leaders familiar and new.

A look at the season by the numbers:

Jack Fisher-trained Cooper (left) and Ethics tied for the 3-year-old championship.

1 Purses matter. For the first time, American steeplechasing **surpassed $7 million in total purses**. Bolstered by an expanded racetrack presence at Saratoga Race Course in New York and Colonial Downs in Virginia, 453 horses competed in 180 races for $7,652,150. Ten years ago, purses reached $5,836,050. Twenty years ago, the number was $5,120,875. And five years ago, in a Covid-ravaged 2020? $1,617,550. We don't do higher math, but that's a big recovery. The 180 races were the most on the NSA calendar since 2017, while the horse figure reached its highest total since 2019.

2 The 3-year-old championship lasted until the final day and wound up in a tie between Jack Fisher trainees **Cooper** and **Ethics**. The former was bred and owned by Godolphin and the latter was bred and owned by Claiborne Farm and Adele Dilschneider before making the transition to jumping. Yup, they're Thoroughbreds.

3 **Swore** won three races during an upstart season, leaping from a maiden win at Colonial Downs in August to a Grade 1 win at Aqueduct in September. Owned by prominent flat owners Stone Farm and Upland Flats, trained by Keri Brion and ridden by Stephen Mulqueen, the son of Broken Vow secured the novice hurdle championship (horses who started the years maidens) with $181,800.

4 Jockey **Graham Watters** won his fourth races-won title in a season where he dominated from start to finish, despite breaking his left wrist in April and again in November. The Irish-born, Maryland-based jockey said goodbye to Snap Decision and missed 11 rides over the final weekend, including an assignment on eventual Colonial Cup winner Fil Dor (Fr). "One thing I've learned this year is it doesn't always end the way you want." Watters will be back for his 10th American season next year. He passed Scott Riles, Jonathan Smart, Gregg Morris, George Sloan, Charlie Fenwick, Scotty Schulhofer, Ronnie Armstrong, Xavier Aizpuru, Tom Skiffington, Ross Geraghty, John Cushman, Chuck Lawrence and Gus Brown to move into 29th on the all-time wins list.

5 In a tough day for American participants and loyalists, Irish trainer **Gordon Elliott** swept all five hurdle stakes at New Jersey's Far Hills Races in October. The haul placed Elliott seventh in the overall earnings and exposed the talent chasm between the two continents. The gap only widens when it rains before the sport's most lucrative stop. Time to step up, America.

6 Pennsylvania-based trainer **Ricky Hendriks** won six races on the season and finished with a last-day double, taking the Hobkirk Hill with Del Rio Racing's Coutach (Ire) and the Colonial Cup with Morningstar Farm's Fil Dor. Both horses stayed in the United States after Elliott's raid at Far Hills. It had been 35 years since former champion jockey Hendriks guided Victorian Hill to a front-running win in the Colonial Cup.

7 Jockey **Bernie Dalton** won seven stakes during a 15-win season. The 57-year-old veteran won Grade 1 stakes on Abaan and Cool Jet (Ire), two Grade 3 stakes with Cool Jet, two novice stakes with China Beach and a 4-year-old stakes with Naturally Nimble (Ger). The South Carolina-based jockey tied for second by wins and was second alone by earnings. In a sign of rising purses and Watters' proficiency, Dalton's $908,820 would have won the earnings crown every season but the last two. There's always next year for Dalton, who rode his first race in 2004 and moved past Lawrence, Brown, Danielle Hodsdon, Darren Nagle, Arch Kingsley and Hendriks and into a tie with Tommy Field at 23rd all time. "Makes an old man feel young," Dalton said after guiding Cool Jet to win the Commonwealth Cup in the spring. One of many to do that trick.

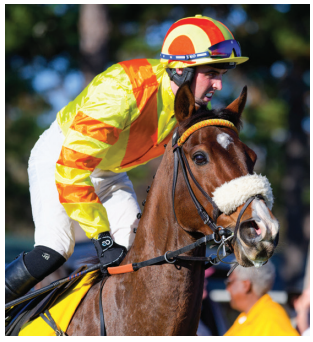
8 The eight Grade 1 stakes went to eight horses in 2025. **Cool Jet, Abaan, Proven Innocent, Historic Heart (Ire), Jimmy P, Swore, Zanahiyr (Ire)** and **Fil Dor** split the big ones. With two additional Grade 3 scores, Cool Jet secured the Lonesome Glory Award as the sport's leading earner with $190,500. Owned by Riverdee Stable, trained by Fisher and ridden by Dalton, the 9-year-old missed one check on the season when falling at the first fence in the season-ending Colonial Cup in November. Voters will decide the Eclipse Award this month.

9 Trainer Kate Dalton, Bernie's wife and biggest fan, aims to get **Abaan** back to the races at age 9 in the spring. The most debonair horse in the sport – at least since Snap Decision retired – won the Grade 1 Iroquois in May but failed to return to the races in the fall. Owned by Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Daigneault Thoroughbreds, the son of Will Take Charge could go over $1 million in earnings (flat and jump) with a return to his best.

10 In a welcome return, **Laurel Park** hosted 10 horses for a maiden hurdle in June. It was the first time the jumpers had raced there since 2000. Back then, the Maryland oval was one of 13 racetracks

to host jump races. Can you name them? OK, here goes. Saratoga, Keeneland, Pimlico, Churchill Downs, Belmont Park, Colonial Downs, Arlington Park, Kentucky Downs, Calder Race Course, Saratoga Open House, Philadelphia Park and Tampa Bay Downs.

11 Jockey **Evan Dwan** won at 11.8 percent on the season to win the apprentice championship. The Irishman, based with trainer Tom Garner in Maryland, rode 105 races, the most by any jockey during the season. Dwan won races for Garner, Todd Wyatt, Kathy Neilson and Cyril Murphy.



12 The **Aiken Fall Races** and the **Colonial Cup** offered 12 races over two days to close the season with a bang in late November. In a sport where dates conflict and goals don't always align, the two meets combined for a festive final weekend in November. Golfing, shooting, polo exhibitions, mornings on the gallops, afternoon racing, an awards ceremony and late-night dancing. Like the old days.

13 **Riverdee Stable** notched 13 wins and $516,800 in 2025 to lead all owners by wins and earnings. Led by Cool Jet, promising novice Cyber Ninja, 3-year-old champion Ethics and two-time timber winner Potus, Sean and Anne Clancy's syndicate earned its first leading owner title and climbed into the top 10 on the all-time list of owners.

14 **Mark Beecher.** The Maryland-based trainer enjoyed a breakout season by winning 14 races, including the Maryland Hunt Cup and Pennsylvania Hunt Cup with Maryland-breds Road to Oz and Master Seville over timber and the Life's Illusion over hurdles with Timetoshine (Fr), but still didn't have the best training season of the family. Father-in-law Henry Walters enjoyed a magical ride with Maryland Million Classic winner and $700,000 earner Barbadian Runner.

Mark and Rebecca Beecher.

15 **Zarak the Brave (Fr), Madaket's Arrow** and **Vae Patron (Fr)** combined to make 15 starts and earn $167,000 without winning a race. They were game, hitting the board in stakes up and down the circuit. All three deserve win photos in 2026.

16 With 27 wins from 103 starts, **Jack Fisher** earned his 16th training championship. The Maryland-based Hall of Famer led Leslie Young by 10 wins. Fisher campaigned leading earner Cool Jet, champion timber horse Keys Discount (Fisher's 15th timber champion), 3-year-old champions Cooper and Ethics plus Grade 1 winner Proven Innocent and Grade 2 winner Snap Decision. The results don't count here, but Fisher won a Maryland/Virginia-restricted turf stakes with Mission North and a $178,400 maiden turf race at Kentucky Downs with The Jackal. With $1,229,500 in steeplechase earnings, Fisher inched ever closer to Jonathan Sheppard's all-time earnings mark. Just $2,126,803 to go.

17 Champion **Snap Decision** retired with 17 career hurdle wins. Owned by Bruton Street US and trained by Fisher, the son of Hard Spun earned $1,258,150 over jumps, second only to Hall of Famer McDynamo's $1,310,104 in North American history. Snap Decision won an Eclipse Award as champion steeplechaser of 2024 and was a finalist for the 2023, 2022, 2021 and 2020 awards – receiving the second-most votes each time. He won five Grade 1 stakes, captured 15 stakes overall, and led the NSA annual earnings table in 2024 and 2022. The Kentucky-bred opened 2025 with a history-making fourth win in the Grade 2 Temple Gwathmey in April and a second in the Grade 1 Iroquois in May. Barred from running in New York due to an age restriction, he missed four Grade 1 opportunities at Saratoga and Aqueduct and closed his career with back-to-back losses in October. "He didn't quite tell us it was time, he didn't blurt it out anyway, but he's going to be 12 years old next year," said Fisher at the end. "There isn't

much more he can do and he's done a lot. To walk away sound and still happy, that's the best part, that's the cool thing. Just having an 11-year-old running was cool. He's done so much for the sport, for horse racing in general and for us. I never had a problem with him – no ankles, no knees, no tendons – he's a horse of a lifetime."

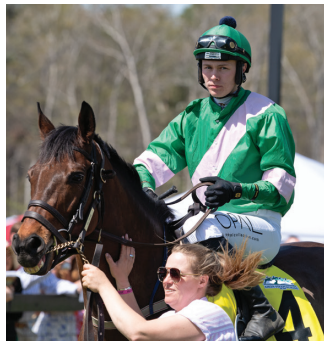
18 Eighteen horses ran over timber at the **Winterthur Races** in 2025. Where will they go in 2026? Delaware's only steeplechase canceled its 2026 edition, further eroding a once-robust Delaware Valley circuit.

19 It's been 19 years since Lisa and Zohar Ben-Dov's **Kinross Farm** earned its first and only owner championship. Lisa, a stalwart supporter of the sport, died in December. She will be missed in the Middleburg, Va., community and beyond.

20 Twenty horses completed the course in three hurdle races at the revived **Loudoun Hunt Steeplechase** at Virginia's Morven Park course April 20. Once a twice-a-year fixture on the NSA tour, the meet joined Old Dominion, Cheshire and Blue Ridge as hybrid stops (sanctioned and unsanctioned point-to-point races on the day) and provided a needed opportunity for mid-level horses.

21 **Keys Discount** jumped 21 fences in the International Gold Cup. One extra (it's a long story) but same result. The Maryland-bred ran the table, winning five stakes and securing another timber championship for owners Dolly and John Fisher. A $2,000 yearling purchase at Fasig-Tipton Midlantic by the late Gordie Keys, who knew a bargain when he saw one, the son of Medal Count produced 17⅛ miles of improbable perfection from April through October. Bred by Bryan Minnich, the now 7-year-old won the Middleburg Hunt Cup, Virginia Gold Cup, Brown Advisory, National Sporting Library and Museum Cup and International Gold Cup.

22 **Parker Hendriks** retired in the spring. The 22-year-old champion jockey suffered a concussion in March, rode a flat race in April and called it a career. He won 54 races (flat and jump) in five seasons. The son of trainers Ricky Hendriks and Sanna Neilson took a job as an assistant to prominent flat trainer Mike Stidham. One sport's loss is another's gain.



23 Newly appointed assistant director of racing **Keith O'Brien** won 23 jump races from 1991-98. His last winner came aboard Petroski for Hall of Famer Tom Voss in the Grade 1 New York Turf Writers Cup at Saratoga in 1996. O'Brien joined the NSA staff in the fall and was a welcome addition (re-addition) to the sport.

24 Twenty-four **American-bred horses** faced 25 European-bred horses over the six-race card at Far Hills. There were no wins for the home country as Cyber Ninja, Anoint, Passing Game, Worthington and Maryland-bred Starlifter managed to hit the board on the sport's richest card. What does that mean? Good question.

25 **Avakate (Ire)** won two races at Colonial Downs by a combined 25¾ lengths to earn the filly and mare championship. Owned by Ballybristol Farm, Vincent Bonanni and Two Virginia Gents, the daughter of Irish-bred Affinisea earned $96,000 in those two starts to take the prize for trainer Neil Morris.

COADY MEDIA

— In Memoriam —

Tony Mills

Kentucky resident Tony Mills, co-owner of Maryland-based stallion Cupid through his Sugar Mill Stables, died Dec. 7. The entrepreneur and former University of Kentucky football player was 60 years old.

Mills was born in Indiana and, according to a family obituary, was an avid outdoorsman who "found peace under open skies and joy in every adventure – whether fishing in tranquil lakes or, later in life, enjoying the pristine waters of Greece." Mills distilled and distributed bourbon, built restaurants, mentored Kentuckians and owned Thoroughbred horses, "a passion that brought him great joy."

Mills helped bring Cupid to Maryland, teaming up with Gary Murray at Atlanta Hall Farm to stand the stallion who started his career at Coolmore's Ashford Stud in Kentucky.

Survivors include his wife, Mirella; sons, Rollie and Alex Mills; future daughter-in-law Claire Rowlands; his Greek family; and his sister, Lisa Mills.

Bev Raymond

Maryland horsewoman Beverly "Bev" Raymond died Dec. 6 after a battle with endometrial cancer. She was 85.

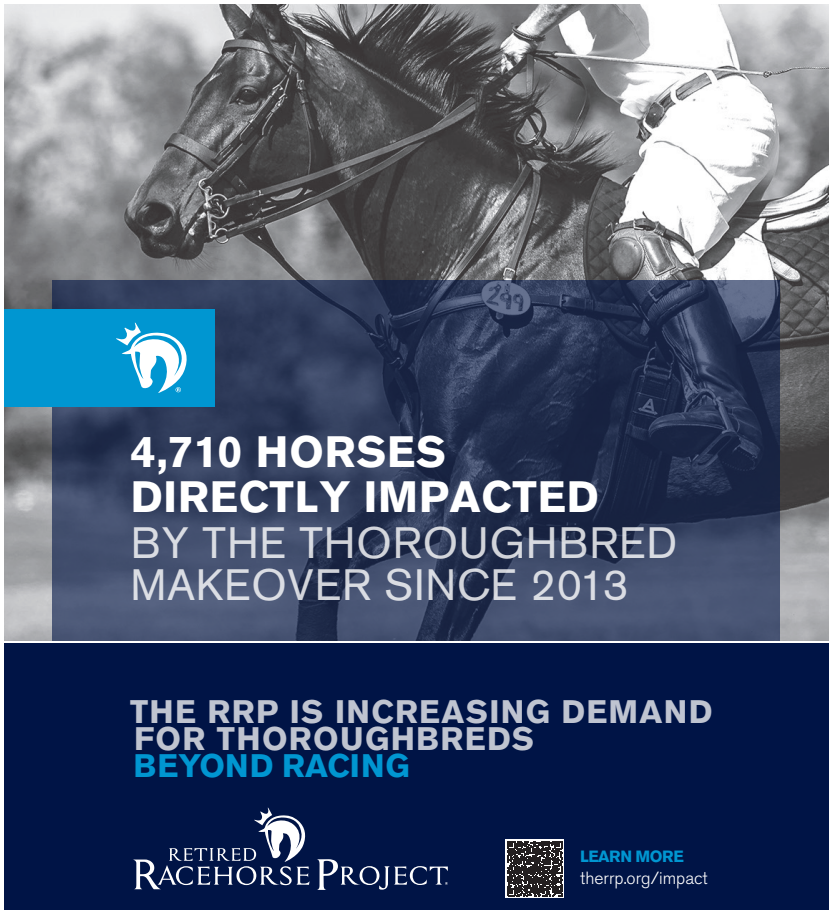
Raymond earned recognition from three Maryland governors and was a pioneer in equine welfare from her Orwell Farm in Upper Falls, Md. Raymond served on the Maryland Horse Industry Board, a program of the state Department of Agriculture, and was the state inspector and volunteer executive director in the early years. She was instrumental in founding the Maryland Horse Council, an umbrella organization representing all aspects of the industry.

She worked to enact legislation that made malicious cruelty to animals a felony instead of a misdemeanor, and to establish MHIB as an equine commodity board funded in part through industry contributions from feed manufacturers. She also developed programs to create the first volunteer mounted patrols in state and local parks and to expand the definition of agriculture in state regulations to include all horse operations.

Raymond received the Maryland Horse Council's Anne and Gilbert Pumphrey "Unsung Hero" Award in 1999, and was named MHC's Horse Person of the Year in 2011. In 2013, the American Horse Council awarded her the national Van Ness Award, given "to an individual who best emulates the dedication and commitment of Marjorie Van Ness to the improvement of the horse industry at the state level." Former governor Parris Glendening once named her one of "Maryland's Most Beautiful People" in a "Maryland You Are Beautiful" program.

In recent years she and Kathleen Tabor certified stables to be part of the MHIB's Horse Discovery Center program, a network of 42 horse establishments in 18 counties.

Raymond is survived by her husband Bob Kipp.



Maryland Horse®

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Breaking Through

Code of Silence, Just Philtored come into own in Maryland Juvenile stakes triumphs

By Ali Çetinok

Jim McCue

Code of Silence arrives in time to win the Maryland Juvenile Stakes.

When Code of Silence earned his late-running victory in the $125,000 Maryland Juvenile Stakes Dec. 6 at Laurel Park, it felt less like the crowning of a promising 2-year-old and more like the continuation of a lineage that has strengthened Maryland's breeding DNA for decades.

The son of Blofeld, campaigned by Ken and Mary Holt's Mount Peru Farm and co-bred with longtime partners Richard and Wendy Palumbo, did more than win his first stakes. The dark bay gelding reflected a series of careful breeding decisions, family history and morning work rooted in a philosophy that is as "Maryland Horse" as it gets.

The result fit with the horse trainer Tim Keefe says has been special from the start, and similar to a runner from the same family.

"He's such a cool horse," Keefe said. "Obviously, the connection with the family, because I've had some of the siblings. I've never had two siblings that were so much alike, him and Tattooed. It took that horse a little while to figure things out mentally, but physically, these two are very much alike. This horse, in particular, is just a really fun horse to be around. He's big, very pleasant, does everything you ask him to do . . . It's been fun watching him mature, both physically and mentally and figure things out. He's just been a lot of fun."

Jim McCue

Just Philtored glides to victory in the Maryland Juvenile Filly Stakes.

The Holts feel the same. Their connection to Maryland racing runs deep. Ken Holt, the secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development from 2015-23, worked on the backside at Laurel Park as a college student, buying and reselling horses to pay tuition.

"There were great horses on the grounds, including Spectacular Bid, Cormorant, Rushing Man, some of the tremendous champions of the 1970s," Holt said. "It was a very exciting and dynamic period for a young 20-year-old guy who went to the University of Maryland, who loved horses."

Mary Holt grew up even closer to the sport. Her brother, Allen Murray, exercised horses at Havre de Grace racetrack and started Murmur Farm with his wife Audrey.

"I spent most of my weekends growing up on their farm, mucking out stalls, riding horses," Mary said. "You learn to love them. When Ken and I met, we both had this love of horses. We decided that's what we would do together as our business."

So that's what they did. The horses raised on their Mount Peru Farm in Kingsville are treated like family, with all the highs and lows that come with it.

"As anyone who does this business knows, it's a very up and down business with a lot of sadness, a lot of exhilaration and excitement," Mary said. "We take the bad with the good and keep going. We breed our horses. We foal them here. We raise them up like our children."

Code of Silence, massive even as a youngster, required a unique breaking strategy.

"We love him obviously and he's a very kind horse, he was a tough customer to break, though." Mary said. "Ken broke him here and we broke him using peppermints. He was such a big yearling that Ken actually had a stepladder that he climbed up to get on the horse. He stood like a statue while Ken climbed up on the ladder, but then he didn't want to move, so we encouraged him with mints – that's how we broke him, it was the only way because he was so big. He was kind of like a buffalo."

After early training in Baltimore County, Code of Silence headed to Lynn Ashby at Marlyn Meadow in Delaware for more education. Ashby has been a central figure for the Holts' program and others seeking to participate in the Delaware-certified program.

Code of Silence's pedigree is rooted in Maryland, as he is out of Tough Talkin Lady, a stakes-placed Oratory mare and half-sister to Monster Sleeping, a two-time Maryland Million Ladies winner. Monster Sleeping produced the 2022 Maryland Million Nursery winner, Johnyz From Albany. Another sibling, Middle Jewel, has produced multiple high-quality runners including 12-time winner Shinelikeadiamond.

All descend from the Holts' homebred mare Bold Questor, a daughter of Norquestor and Twice Boldly who raced for the Holts in the 1980s.

"I think these are emerging genetics and we're very fortunate because it descends from this one mare," Ken said. "That's pretty typical of Maryland smalltime breeders."

Their loyalty extends to Murmur Farm, where Maryland standout Blofeld stands. Carrying on without her husband, who died in 2013, Audrey Murray bought the son of Quality Road in 2017 and he has become a regional leader whose entire first crop of 19 starters won races. Through Dec. 11, Code of Silence was one of eight juvenile winners in Blofeld's fifth crop.

"He's now, I think, emerging as the heir apparent to Not For Love and Great Notion, that wonderful series of top Maryland sires," said Ken.

Observers naturally compare Code of Silence with his half-brother Tattooed, who won six races and placed in another 15 for Keefe. The son of Etched earned $400,269, highlighted by a win in the 2021 Jennings Stakes and a second in that year's General George-G3.

"Brilliant size," Keefe said of the brothers. "They're both big-framed; long strides carry them . . . On the racetrack, their attitudes are the same."

Mary also noted the personality match.

"They call him Junior. They say he's Tattooed Jr.," she said. "Those are very kind horses . . . They run like hell but back at the barn, they're just like old lean ponies."

Code of Silence finished second in his debut going 6 furlongs at Delaware Park in July, and was third in a stakes at the same track and distance in September. Checked at the start of the Maryland Million Nursery in October, Code of Silence rallied from last of 13 to finish sixth. In November at Laurel, he charged from the back to win a maiden special weight for Maryland-bred or -sired runners. Stretched to 7 furlongs in the Maryland Juvenile, he again started late while ninth early and charged seven wide off the turn to win by a neck.

Looking ahead, all involved expect distance to enhance his potential, with a focus on two-turn contests.

"That's the idea anyway," Keefe said. "I think he's going to be better going farther."

Just Philtored shines in Juvenile Filly Stakes

Code of Silence represented bloodlines nurtured for generations, and Just Philtored's win in the Maryland Juvenile

Filly Stakes the same day highlighted another Maryland dynasty written by 2022 Maryland Broodmare of the Year Slow and Steady, ZWP Stables and an emerging filly.

Just Philtored, a daughter of Great Notion bred by ZWP and Non Stop Stable and owned by Red White and Blue Racing and London Reid Thoroughbreds, likely cemented her status as the 2025 Maryland-bred champion 2-year-old filly.

Trainer Mike Trombetta praised her versatility.

"The filly has done everything we've asked of her," Trombetta said. "I was really starting to believe that maybe she needed turf . . . but the other day, the way she ran, we may have to revisit that."

For owner Elliot Campbell of London Reid, the win was emotional, another chapter in the story he inherited after the death of close friend Dave Picarello. When Campbell moved to Baltimore, he met Picarello, a co-founder of ZWP Stables.

"I didn't know a lick about horse racing," Campbell said. "He even showed me how Equibase worked."

When Picarello's partner Foard Wilgis passed away in early 2021, Campbell bought his share. After the passing of Picarello in 2023, Campbell bought the remaining share and raced under ZWP as a tribute to them. ZWP's long association with trainer Gary Capuano produced horses such as 2003 Preakness Stakes-G1 starter Cherokee's Boy, more recent multiple stakes winner Malibu Beauty and a host of others.

Malibu Beauty and Just Philtored are out of Slow and Steady, a $14,500 ZWP/Capuano yearling purchase in 2002. Bred by Mrs. Gordon Grayson, the daughter of Malibu Moon won four races and has produced 12 winners from 13 foals to race.

"They took a flyer on her," said Campbell. "Slow and Steady has just been an absolute monster for us, she is just awesome. Just Philtored has awesome siblings too. Malibu Beauty, she's booked to go to Vekoma next year. We're so excited for that. For Slow and Steady, this is going to be her last baby. Slow and Steady is in foal with Arcangelo. Her baby-making days are over, and she has absolutely earned it."

Her 2023 foal, Just Philtored, drew attention after an 8-length debut win at Laurel May 23 for ZWP, Capuano and the trainer's Non Stop Stable. As Campbell put it, "When you win like that, the phone starts ringing." Red, White and Blue Racing, a syndicate created by Twin Creeks Racing's Randy Gullatt, bought into the filly and she moved to Trombetta's barn. For the new trainer, she won the Keswick (dirt) and Dolley Madison (turf) stakes at Colonial Downs in August before finishing fifth in the Matron-G3 at Aqueduct in October and checking in third (to the Capuano-trained Doc's Miracle) in Laurel's Smart Halo in November.

Off the first two losses of her career, Just Philtored – named for Capuano's children Justin, Phil and Tori – outran Slewperstitus late to capture the $125,000 Juvenile Filly by 1¾ lengths. The daughter of Great Notion won for the fourth time in six starts while pushing her earnings to $259,430.

A desire to win is exactly what Campbell admires most about Just Philtored.

"She just likes to run, all the Slow and Steady babies . . . they run to the best of their ability," he said. "It's all in their head, we've been very fortunate with that family."

Foundation expands career program to state's full horse industry

The Maryland Horse Foundation has expanded its signature educational initiative – the Maryland Thoroughbred Career Program – with the launch of the Maryland Horse Career Program, an immersive, week-long experience designed to introduce young adults ages 18-25, to the full breadth of opportunities across Maryland's horse industry. The 2026 program will run June 1-5. Applications are open through Feb. 1.

The MHCP reflects a significant evolution of the foundation's workforce development mission. While the program historically focused on the Thoroughbred sector, the expansion encompasses the entire Maryland horse ecosystem, including racing, breeding, sport, competition, recreation, veterinary and farrier services, event management, media, aftercare and equine-assisted services.

"With this transition to the Maryland Horse Career Program, we are widening the horizon for young people who love horses," said Cricket Goodall, executive director of the Maryland Horse Foundation. "Whether their passion lies in racing, training, veterinary work, competition management, or community programs, we want them to see that Maryland's Horse Industry offers a vibrant, interconnected industry where they can build meaningful and successful careers."

By partnering with the Maryland Horse Industry Board and the University of Maryland's Equine Studies program, participants will go behind the scenes with professionals across multiple sectors of the industry, gaining exposure to an array of equine careers. Graduates of the MHCP are eligible to apply for the Work Experience Program that supports further training, certifications, education and career advancement opportunities.

The application is available online. Interviews will occur in the two weeks following the deadline, with final selections announced in March. See marylandhorse.com/careerprogram for more. Contact Maryanna Skowronski at, maryanna@marylandthoroughbred.com for more information.

Maryland-bred Stakes Winners

Grayson's Girl gets first stakes win in Safely Kept

John Middleton's Grayson's Girl earned her first stakes victory when rallying to win the $100,000 Safely Kept, a 7-furlong test for 3-year-old fillies Nov. 29 at Laurel Park.

Grayson's Girl broke well but dropped back to last in the field of seven as In My Memories, Onyx Ten, Think Fast and Tap Dancin Cowgirl led the pack through a :23.46 opening quarter-mile.

"I was hoping to be a little bit closer to the pace, but they broke out of there running and my filly likes to come from behind," said jockey Jevian Toledo. "I just sat behind and tried to get her outside. She liked it. I think she's better outside horses."

As Grayson's Girl galloped a few lengths back, Onyx Ten, the 3-5 favorite looking for a third straight victory, grabbed the lead after a half-mile in :46.53, then got passed by Think Fast in the mid-stretch.

Grayson's Girl barreled down the center of the track and swept past Think Fast to win by 2¼ lengths in 1:25.01. Onyx Ten was a half-length back in third.

Grayson's Girl's only prior stakes start came in the state-bred restricted Miss Disco at Colonial Downs in July when second to Winfinity after leading in mid-stretch. The gray daughter of Gift Box improved to 9-3-3-3 while earning $181,680.

"Look at her form," said trainer Brittany Russell. "She's never run a bad race for us. There's not much to her, but I tell you what – she's good-training, she's good-moving, and she's hearty. You bring her over to the races, and she runs."

Bred by 2500 Determined Stud and purchased by Middleton for $50,000 as a yearling at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic fall sale, Grayson's Girl won a maiden special weight in her 3-year-old debut April 11 at Laurel by 8 lengths. It was her third start, and her first in nearly nine months. Her second win came in a Laurel allowance Sept. 19 prior to the Safely Kept.

Grayson's Girl is the second foal, and second winner, for the stakes-placed Quality Road mare Drinking Dixie. Matt Dorman's Determined Stud spent $95,000 for Drinking Dixie at the 2020 Keeneland November breeding stock sale while carrying her first foal. That filly, Determined Blue (by Kantharos), is a two-time winner of $92,939.

Drinking Dixie delivered a Maryland-bred colt by Violence named Phenomenal Power in 2023 before selling that November at Keeneland for $65,000 in foal to Maclean's Music. Phenomenal Power, sold at the 2024 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic fall sale for $42,000, has yet to start.

Grayson's Girl was entered again in the Politely Stakes at Laurel in mid-December after this magazine went to press. ❧

Jim McCue (2)

Barbadian Runner adds to growing stakes resume

Cinderella story Barbadian Runner earned his sixth stakes win, and third straight, with a dominating 4¼-length performance in the $100,000 Richard W. Small Stakes at Laurel Park Nov. 22.

Making his 11th start of the year, the AJ Will Win Stables colorbearer defeated older horses and handled 1⅛ miles-for the second straight time, following a Maryland Million Classic score in October.

Under Forest Boyce, Barbadian Runner carried top weight 124 pounds despite being the only 3-year-old in the field. The impost did not deter bettors as he went off the 2-5 favorite in the field of six.

Settled in fourth early behind Hittheroadjak, who carved out fractions of :23.72, :47.53, and 1:12.79, Barbadian Runner made his bid in the stretch and drew clear over the muddy track, stopping the

clock in 1:53.40 and earning a 96 Beyer speed figure, matching his career best from the Maryland Million. A claim of foul by Sheldon Russell, second aboard Phantom Speed, for interference entering the final turn was dismissed.

"He's fantastic," said Boyce about her mount, who won for the seventh time from 19 lifetime starts. "You've got to love him. They were trying to bully him a little down the backside. He might be little, but he tries so hard every time."

Multiple stakes-placed, and on the board six times in eight starts at 2, Barbadian Runner got his first stakes victory in the Spectacular Bid at Laurel last January, followed by the Miracle Wood in February. A Jersey Derby win came in May; in the Robert Hilton Memorial in August he defeated Kentucky Derby-G1 runners Neoequos and Owen Almighty. The November win boosted his career earnings of $790,630; his $713,185 this year ranked him third among Maryland-breds, behind only Grade 1 winner Mindframe ($1,407,220) and Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint-G1 winner Splendora ($722,400).

Barbadian Runner was entered in the $100,000 Robert T. Manfuso Stakes against open company Dec. 20 after this magazine went to press. Among the entries was Maryland Million Classic rival Post Time.

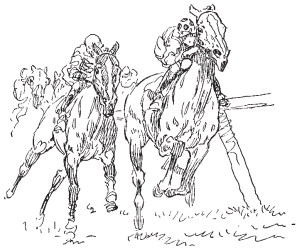
A gelded son of former Maryland sire Barbados, Barbadian Runner was purchased by Scott Groh of AJ Will Win Stables for $5,000 at the 2023 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic fall sale.

"We were just hoping to get a decent Maryland-bred that would be competitive at any level," said trainer Henry Walters after the Small. "You don't expect a whole lot when you have modest money you're spending."

Bred by Shamrock Farm, Barbadian Runner is the fourth winner from four named foals out of the unraced Northern Afleet mare Quiet Run and is a full-brother to Sue Loves Barbados, who has banked $245,929. ❧

Thank you for supporting the development of the Maryland Horse Industry Strategic Plan established through the Gov. Wes Moore's recent executive order. We are grateful for your participation and for the expertise you bring to this collaborative, statewide effort.

Please use this QR code to access the form. There you can share your ideas and solutions for the future of the Maryland Horse Ecosystem. This outreach ensures we can bring Maryland's diverse horse ecosystem together to shape a unified and forward-looking strategic plan.



Maryland Fund Report

Bonuses paid for races run at Maryland tracks from September 2 through September 30, 2025

Breeder bonuses

Includes the additional 10 percent Maryland-sired bonus for winners of maiden races, initiated Jan. 1 during the 2022 Laurel winter meet. That bonus is reflected in the second figure earned for the race.

Prudence Ann Adamson—Call Me a Cab: Sept. 27, 4th race, $1,080.

Andrew E. Ali—Decorum: Sept. 6, 7th race, $6,075.

Amy H. Daney Bloodstock LLC—Pegster: Sept. 20, 1st race, $675.

Barak Farm—Barbados Bulldog: Sept. 26, 10th race, $2,583.

Barak Farm and Dinos Thoroughbreds LLC—Mister Roscoe: Sept. 27, 8th race, $4,050.

William Bayne and Super C Racing—Country Bumpkin: Sept. 6, 5th race, $1,417.50.

Best A Luck Farm LLC—Kittyup: Sept. 13, 3rd race, $1,480.50.

Teresa L. Beste—Navani: Sept. 26, 4th race, $2,385.

Big Lick Farm and Erin Atkiss—Knockanara: Sept. 12, 8th race, $2,205.

James A. Blackwell—Hard Freeze: Sept. 28, 2nd race, $1,845.

Charles Blanford—Uncle Irish: Sept. 13, 2nd race, $810.

David Benjamin Bloom—Furious George: Sept. 27, 11th race, $990. Gotta Be Da Shoes: Sept. 6, 9th race, $1,080. Holy Storm: Sept. 7, 6th race, $1,512. ($3,582)

Richard F. Blue Jr.—Hot Boss: Sept. 5, 4th race, $1,080. Owhatanite: Sept. 13, 4th race, $3,240. Princess Clemmie: Sept. 7, 5th race, $3,240. ($7,560)

Bonita Farm—Hittheroadjak: Sept. 14, 8th race, $2,520.

Bonita Farm and Grandview Stable Inc.—Kobe's Hope: Sept. 26, 5th race, $3,240/$1,080. ($4,320)

Matthew Bright—Brighty: Sept. 14, 9th race, $4,050.

Jerome C. Burdick—Tea Rose: Sept. 7, 9th race, $540; Sept. 26, 5th race, $1,080. ($1,620)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman—Canadian Bear: Sept. 28, 3rd race, $540. Noble Status: Sept. 20, 2nd race, $5,670. ($6,210)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Dr. Brooke Bowman—Dale's Bluff: Sept. 5, 7th race, $1,543.50.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Dr. Brooke Bowman and Estate of Milton P. Higgins III—Post Time: Sept. 7, 8th race, $13,500.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Rebecca Davis and Dr. Brooke Bowman—Mopo: Sept. 19, 8th race, $2,160.

Bowman and Higgins Stable—Master of None: Sept. 21, 4th race, $1,305.

Kim and Kelly Campbell—Esroh: Sept. 12, 2nd race, $5,400. Secure's Hope: Sept. 7, 3rd race, $6,615. ($12,015)

Louis C. Carrico—Nancy Mary: Sept. 12, 2nd race, $900.

Wes Carter—Had to Have Him: Sept. 13, 8th race, $13,500.

Clover Hill Farm Inc.—All Fruits Ripe: Sept. 5, 5th race, $540.

Sam Cockburn—Tuff Luck: Sept. 27, 2nd race, $1,080.

Cottonwood Stable LLC—Paynted Lion: Sept. 12, 6th race, $540.

Country Life Farm, Paul Berube and Karen Linnell—Touisset: Sept. 19, 8th race, $1,080.

Country Life Farm and Fifteen Moons LLC—Ariel Moon: Sept. 5, 4th race, $540.

Country Life Farm and Keep Right LLC—Pay Zone: Sept. 19, 2nd race, $652.50.

Country Life Farm and Sister State LLC—Lady Ensign: Sept. 7, 3rd race, $1,102.50.

Country Roads Ltd.—My Flicker: Sept. 6, 4th race, $1,417.50.

Dark Hollow Farm—Whiskeyinthejaro: Sept. 20, 7th race, $1,102.50.

Rebecca B. Davis—Great Andrei: Sept. 19, 7th race, $2,160.
James T. Dresher Jr.—Caseofthemondays: Sept. 26, 6th race, $2,583.
Hassan Elamri—Golden Can: Sept. 6, 6th race, $1,080.
Annette Eubanks and Daniel Eubanks—World On Fire: Sept. 5, 3rd race, $495.
Flying H Stables LLC—Tell 'Em I'm Comin: Sept. 14, 6th race, $1,350.
Greycross Stable LLC—Seaside Road: Sept. 12, 2nd race, $1,800.
Mary Haire—Speightful Sis: Sept. 19, 8th race, $6,480. Ecliptical Gina: Sept. 7, 5th race, $540. Noah Chance: Sept. 21, 8th race, $6,480. Prince of Darkness: Sept. 27, 8th race, $675. ($7,695)
Michael J. Harrison DVM—Cluck Cluck: Sept. 26, 8th race, $2,520.
Herringswell Stables Ltd.—Anotherhope: Sept. 14, 4th race, $495.
James Hibbert—Cactus: Sept. 21, 8th race, $2,160.
Hickory Ridge Farm—All the Hardways: Sept. 20, 4th race, $2,160.
Hillwood Stable LLC—Golden Kid: Sept. 28, 2nd race, $922.50.
Michael and Debbie Horning—Princess Lucia: Sept. 14, 4th race, $2,970.
Jagger Inc.—Impressiveness: Sept. 6, 5th race, $2,835; Sept. 26, 6th race, $1,291.50. Little Lance: Sept. 19, 4th race, $810. Nit Witness: Sept. 21, 9th race, $1,350. Rowsie Express: Sept. 28, 8th race, $2,205. ($8,491.50)
Jet Black LLC—Stars Align: Sept. 6, 1st race, $1,080.
Estate of R. Larry Johnson—Coringa: Sept. 14, 7th race, $6,480. Heard On Thestreet: Sept. 21, 6th race, $1,260. Waittilmidnitehour: Sept. 7, 3rd race, $2,205. ($9,945)
Hope Haskell Jones—Shine On Moon: Sept. 28, 9th race, $2,205.
Owen Kiernan—Ade: Sept. 14, 4th race, $990.
Lady Olivia at North Cliff LLC—Italiano Kid: Sept. 27, 4th race, $540. Julia's a Fox: Sept. 28, 10th race, $540. ($1,080)
Carl Lanier—She's No Uncle: Sept. 27, 6th race, $1,080.
Lewis Family Racing Stable—Neverworkedaday: Sept. 6, 7th race, $1,012.50.
Little Man Farm—Tidewater: Sept. 28, 7th race, $7,155.
Magic Carpet Racing—Elusive Image: Sept. 5, 1st race, $4,050.
Make My Day Stable—Agent Kelly: Sept. 21, 1st race, $1,350.
Marathon Farm Inc.—Real Talented: Sept. 5, 3rd race, $990.
Helen C. Marshall—Big Earn: Sept. 26, 3rd race, $3,240.
Ann W. Merryman—Fahnee: Sept. 6, 1st race, $3,240/$1,080. ($4,320)
Elizabeth M. Merryman—Stanza: Sept. 28, 6th race, $1,845.
Mike Dalton LLC—Quincannon: Sept. 12, 4th race, $810. Sneaking Suspicion: Sept. 13, 4th race, $540. ($1,350)
Paige Mohan—A P M Notion: Sept. 12, 9th race, $495.
Murmur Farm—Bold Diversion: Sept. 20, 4th race, $6,480.
Nancy Lee Farms—Margaret P: Sept. 21, 9th race, $4,050/$1,350. Teddy's Lucky Girl: Sept. 26, 2nd race, $495. ($5,895)
New Farm Breeding Inc.—Flatter My Dad: Sept. 14, 3rd race, $2,115.
No Guts No Glory Farm—Bigdaddysboy: Sept. 7, 1st race, $3,240. Blind Love: Sept. 7, 6th race, $4,536. In Honor of Jeff: Sept. 13, 5th race, $756. ($8,532)
Clarke Ohrstrom—Granuaile: Sept. 28, 1st race, $540.
Old Dominion Thoroughbreds and KMR Racing Stable—Nothingbutbluesky: Sept. 14, 7th race, $1,080.
David W. Palmer—Kissling: Sept. 14, 2nd race, $2,970. Preparefortakeoff: Sept. 27, 7th race, $7,155. ($10,125)
Ronald Harris Parker—Malibu's Rumrunner: Sept. 5, 6th race, $2,835. Princess Charming: Sept. 20, 2nd race, $1,350. ($4,185)
Dr. and Mrs. A. Leonard Pineau—Change My World: Sept. 12, 8th race, $1,102.50.
Casey Pinkard—Skittliedat: Sept. 12, 1st race, $922.50.
Joel Politi—Biscuitwiththeboss: Sept. 14, 1st race, $4,050. Jolly Boss: Sept. 21, 8th race, $1,080. Lightning Boss: Sept. 27, 5th race, $990. Nola Boss: Sept. 21, 5th race, $540. ($6,660)
Mr. and Mrs. A. John Price—Sheezahotmess: Sept. 7, 4th race, $990; Sept. 26, 2nd race, $2,970. ($3,960)
Richard Price and Adina Price—Golden Sand: Sept. 13, 5th race, $1,512; Sept. 28, 2nd race, $7,749. ($9,261)
Vivian E. Rall—Super Chunk: Sept. 20, 3rd race, $3,240/$1,080. ($4,320)
Charles J. Reed—Monster Summer: Sept. 5, 4th race, $3,240.
Randy Ridgely—Wickeddivine: Sept. 20, 4th race, $1,080.
Rolling Meadows Farm—Christmas Jones: Sept. 13, 3rd race, $2,961. Summerinthecountry: Sept. 6, 7th race, $2,025. Sweeterthanwhiskey: Sept. 14, 1st race, $1,350. ($6,336)
Frank T. Sample—Secret Zipper: Sept. 14, 8th race, $1,260.
South Branch Equine LLC—Sharmin: Sept. 12, 3rd race, $4,050.
Matt Spencer and Kelly Cox—Anita Beer: Sept. 7, 4th race, $2,970/$990. ($3,960)
Super C Racing Inc.—Buckin' Right: Sept. 6, 9th race, $3,240/$1,080. ($4,320)
Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC—Conquerthosewecan: Sept. 20, 8th race, $2,250. Formal Affair: Sept. 27, 2nd race, $540. Garage Beers: Sept. 14, 3rd race, $1,057.50. Great Artist: Sept. 14, 5th race, $1,080. Lovely Charm: Sept. 26, 4th race, $7,155. Share Success: Sept. 5, 6th race, $8,505. ($20,587.50)
Tanterra Stables—Mo's Glitter: Sept. 6, 5th race, $8,505.
The Elkstone Group LLC—Lifelovenlaughter: Sept. 13, 6th race, $4,500. Stewball: Sept. 5, 8th race, $5,535. Yo Adrian: Sept. 6, 3rd race, $5,535. ($15,570)
Thornmar Farm LLC—Admit Nothing: Sept. 7, 2nd race, $2,430; Sept. 21, 2nd race, $450. Who Says So: Sept. 28, 5th race, $990. ($3,870)
Marie Trombetta and Commonwealth New Era Racing—As the Bell Toles: Sept. 5, 6th race, $1,012.50.
Katharine Merryman Voss—Divine Works: Sept. 19, 7th race, $1,080. Frappart: Sept. 13, 1st race, $4,050/$1,350; Sept. 26, 1st race, $675. Ticklers: Sept. 13, 1st race, $675. ($7,830)
Mary P. Voss—Zevon: Sept. 14, 7th race, $2,160; Sept. 20, 7th race, $2,205. ($4,365)
David H. Wade—Rominski: Sept. 21, 6th race, $7,560.
Warning Drums Racing LLC—Diane Lee: Sept. 27, 6th race, $540. Happy This Day: Sept. 28, 3rd race, $1,080. Radiant Tones: Sept. 7, 9th race, $1,080. ($2,700)
Wasabi Ventures Stables LLC, Greenspring Mares LLC and Gregory Caliwag—Railroad Inn: Sept. 27, 11th race, $495.
Dr. and Mrs. Bruce C. Wells—Running River: Sept. 13, 2nd race, $405.
2500 Determined Holdings—Grayson's Girl: Sept. 19, 7th race, $6,480.

Stallion bonuses

ALLIANCE (Agent Kelly: Sept. 21, 1st race, $450): Lawrence Karp.
BARBADOS (Barbados Bulldog: Sept. 26, 10th race, $615): Shamrock Farm.
BLOFELD (Bold Diversion: Sept. 20, 4th race, $2,160. Christmas Jones: Sept. 13, 3rd race, $705): Blofeld Syndicate—$2,865.
BOURBON COURAGE (All Fruits Ripe: Sept. 5, 5th race, $180. Julia's a Fox: Sept. 28, 10th race $180. Malibu's Rumrunner: Sept. 5, 6th race, $675. Shine On Moon: Sept. 28, 9th race, $735. Sweeterthanwhiskey: Sept. 14, 1st race, $450): Bourbon Courage Syndicate—$2,220.
BUFFUM (Quincannon: Sept. 12, 4th race, $270): Northview for Buffum Syndicate.
DIVINING ROD (Country Bumpkin: Sept. 6, 5th race, $337.50. Divine Works: Sept. 19, 7th race, $360. Wickeddivine: Sept. 20, 4th race, $360): Divining Rod Syndicate—$1,057.50.
ENGAGE (Impressiveness: Sept. 6, 5th race, $675; Sept. 26, 6th race, $307.50. Kittyup: Sept. 13, 3rd race, $352.50. Share Success: Sept. 5, 6th race, $2,025): Northview Stallion Station Inc.—$3,360.
FIRST MONDAYS (Caseofthemondays: Sept. 26, 6th race, $615. Noble Status: Sept. 20, 2nd race, $1,350): First Mondays Partnership—$1,965.
FORCE THE PASS (Frappart: Sept. 13, 1st race, $1,350; Sept. 26, 1st race, $225. Had to Have Him: Sept. 13, 8th race, $4,500): Wasabi Ventures Stables LLC—$6,075.
FRIESAN FIRE (Anita Beer: Sept. 7, 4th race, $990. Buckin' Right: Sept. 6, 9th race, $1,080. Fahnee: Sept. 6, 1st race, $1,080. World On Fire: Sept. 5, 3rd race, $165): Friesan Fire Syndicate—$3,315.
GOLDEN LAD (Golden Can: Sept. 6, 6th race, $360. Golden Sand: Sept. 13, 5th race, $360; Sept. 28, 2nd race, $1,845. Rowsie Express: Sept. 28, 8th race, $735): Golden Lad Syndicate—$3,300.
GREAT NOTION (A P M Notion: Sept. 12, 9th race, $165. Esroh: Sept. 12, 2nd race, $1,800. Great Artist: Sept. 14, 5th race, $360. Mopo: Sept. 19, 8th race, $720. My Flicker: Sept. 6, 4th race, $472.50. Noah Chance: Sept. 21, 8th race, $2,160. Rominski: Sept. 21, 6th race, $2,520. Sneaking Suspicion: Sept. 13, 4th race, $180. Stanza: Sept. 28, 6th race, $615. Tea Rose: Sept. 7, 9th race, $180; Sept. 26, 5th race, $360): Great Notion Syndicate—$9,532.50.
HOLY BOSS (Biscuitwiththeboss: Sept. 14, 1st race, $1,350. Furious George: Sept. 27, 11th race $330. Gotta Be Da Shoes: Sept. 6, 9th race, $360. Granuaile: Sept. 28, 1st race, $180. Holy Storm: Sept. 7, 6th race, $360. Hot Boss: Sept. 5, 4th race, $360. Italiano Kid: Sept. 27, 4th race, $180. Jolly Boss: Sept. 21, 8th race, $360. Lightning Boss: Sept. 27, 5th race, $330. Nola Boss: Sept. 21, 5th race, $180): Holy Boss Syndicate—$3,990.
HOPPERTUNITY (Ade: Sept. 14, 4th race, $330. Who Says So: Sept. 28, 5th race, $330): Northview Stallion Station Inc.—$660.
IMAGINING (Bigdaddysboy: Sept. 7, 1st race, $1,080. Elusive Image: Sept. 5, 1st race, $1,350. Little Lance: Sept. 19, 4th race, $270. Owhatanite: Sept. 13, 4th race, $1,080. Princess Clemmie: Sept. 7, 5th race, $1,080. Zevon: Sept. 14, 7th race, $720; Sept. 20, 7th race, $735): Imagining Syndicate—$6,315.
IRISH WAR CRY (Blind Love: Sept. 7, 6th race, $1,080. Lovely Charm: Sept. 26, 4th race, $2,385. Margaret P: Sept. 21, 9th race, $1,350. Neverworkedaday: Sept. 6, 7th race, $337.50. Whiskeyinthejaro: Sept. 20, 7th race, $367.50): Northview Stallion Station, Inc.—$5,520.
KOBE'S BACK (Hittheroadjak: Sept. 14, 8th race, $840. Kobe's Hope: Sept. 26, 5th race, $1,080): Bonita Farm—$1,920.
LONG RIVER (Running River: Sept. 13, 2nd race, $135): Long River Syndicate.
MADEFROMLUCKY (In Honor of Jeff: Sept. 13, 5th race, $180. Teddy's Lucky Girl: Sept. 26, 2nd race, $165. Tuff Luck: Sept. 27, 2nd race, $360): Madefromlucky Syndicate—$705.
MOSLER (Ariel Moon: Sept. 5, 4th race, $180. Mo's Glitter: Sept. 6, 5th race, $2,025. Pay Zone: Sept. 19, 2nd race, $217.50. Sharmin: Sept. 12, 3rd race, $1,350. Touisset: Sept. 19, 8th race, $360): Mosler Syndicate—$4,132.50.
OUTFLANKER (Tidewater: Sept. 28, 7th race, $2,385): Outflanker Syndicate.
STREET MAGICIAN (Dale's Bluff: Sept. 5, 7th race, $367.50. Heard On Thestreet: Sept. 21, 6th race, $420. Secure's Hope: Sept. 7, 3rd race, $2,205): Estate of R. Larry Johnson—$2,992.50.
SUPER NINETY NINE (Super Chunk: Sept. 20, 3rd race, $1,080): Country Life Farm.
UNCLE LINO (She's No Uncle: Sept. 27, 6th race, $360): Northview Stallion Station.

Maryland-bred top earners in 2025

(through December 15)

1. Mindframe	$1,407,220	11. Coringa	$217,568
2. Splendora	722,400	12. Lifelovenlaughter	210,300
3. Barbadian Runner	713,185	13. Heard On Thestreet	202,712
4. Seismic Beauty	416,840	14. Had to Have Him	194,530
5. Future Is Now	366,000	15. Passion Rules	190,775
6. Post Time	270,795	16. Concrete Faze	190,550
7. Slam Notion	265,540	17. Cluck Cluck	183,228
8. Quint's Brew	260,000	18. Bold Diversion	177,690
9. Just Philtored	259,430	19. Slewperstitus	177,500
10. Onyx Ten	248,000	20. Modus Bestia	177,146

Registration questions?
Membership inquiries?
Call Emily Stakem at 410.252.2100 x 129
Maryland Fund questions?
Call Nicole Hart-Richardson at 410.252.2100 x 128

THE Maryland Horse FOUNDATION

View from the Loft

Vol. 3, Issue 1 Maryland Horse Library & Education Center Monthly News Jan 2026

2025 in Review

What a year it's been! By our count, the MHLEC hosted 20 events in 2025, with 34 speakers/presenters, some 700 program attendees and 3,000 library visitors overall including a delegation from the Swedish Jockey Club.

Library monthly presentations ran the gamut of topics. We take a look back at a selection of events that drew rave reviews:

■ A month-long exhibition Heart of the Turf, The History of Black Horsemen, in February was presented in partnership with the Keeneland Library. Roda Ferraro, Keeneland's library director who was instrumental in the display's creation, gave a talk and presentation to kick off the exhibit. Closing out Black History Month was a talk on the "History and Impact of the Bill Pickett Rodeo" – a traveling rodeo celebrating and honoring Black cowboys and cowgirls.

■ In honor of the 150th running of the Preakness Stakes, the film *The Preakness: An American Classic* was presented. Produced by former Pimlico owner Karin DeFrancis for the 125th anniversary of the race, she and Eclipse Award-winning turf writer John Scheinman provided post film commentary and conversation on the history of the race and their own personal memories.

Continuing the anniversary celebration, 1983 Preakness winning jockey Don Miller Jr. was joined by Bonita Farm's William K. Boniface for a look back at Deputed Testamony's memorable muddy-track victory after a showing the ABC Sports broadcast of the race. Preakness month was also celebrated by an exhibit of historic

Heart of the Turf exhibit and talk – February 2025.

memorabilia, much of which was loaned by Maryland horseman Jay Williamson.

■ In recognition of the 40th anniversary of the Maryland Million, the late, great Jim McKay, who conceived the event and brought it to fruition, was honored. Thanks go out to the McManus family for the loan of memorabilia and to Harford Community College for the wonderful Wider World of Jim McKay exhibit panels.

■ Author talks throughout the year included Brien Bouyea from the National Museum of Racing, who spoke as Editor in Chief of the creation of *The Racetracks of America: From the Pre-Civil War Days to the 21st Century*, published by the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame in partnership with Keeneland Library.

Historian Eliza McGraw visited in April to discuss her newly released book, *Astride: Horses, Women and a Partnership that Shaped America*.

Prolific writers Alicia Stephens Martin and Fran Severn provided insight with a presentation titled Riders of a Certain Age, which addressed ways to stay connected with horses after one gives up throwing a leg over the saddle.

In November, the MHLEC partnered with the 2025 Equus Film and Arts Fest and hosted the literature portion of the event. A host of authors were in attendance for the entire day in the library, with talks given by Cheryl L. Eriksen and Ronda Gregorio, authors of *Greyhound* and *Wild Heart*, respectively.

The Howard and Sondra Bender Educational Series

The 2025 series focused on equine health and safety and were presented by a range of experts in their fields on the following topics:

■ In Case of an Equine Emergency: Emergency Preparedness for the Horse Owner

■ Bio-Security for Horses: What Does That Look Like?

■ Equine Dentistry, Bit and Bridle Fitting

Thanks to Dr. Kathy Anderson, Dr. Rachel Blakey, Dr. Andrew McClain, Dr. Brooke Harper, Evie Hickman/Equine Rescue Ambulance, PJ Arnold, Karen Clark, Pegeen Morgan and Ellen James for generously donating their time.

We're in the News!

WBAL and WMAR 2 television stations came out to cover our Black History Month exhibit and programming. The Plaid Horse Plaidcast crew recorded an episode of their nationally broadcast podcast, and the *Baltimore Afro-American* and *Lancaster Farming* newspapers sent reporters for library features.

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THE THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY NEWSLETTER

Post Time

- News, views and insights that matter to breeders, owners and racing industry professionals - **January 2026** -

In This Issue

Stallion Season Auction set for January 19

TBANJ hires Bill Caruso as Governmental Affairs representative

TBANJ meets with Secretary of Agriculture to discuss growth of the state's breeding industry

New Jersey's 2026 Thoroughbred Racing Calendar

TBANJ Membership Application

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Stallion Season Auction set for January 19

The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey (TBANJ) will conduct its annual Stallion Season Auction from Monday, Jan. 19, to Sunday, Jan. 26.

The online auction will be hosted on the Thoroughlybred bidding platform at www.thoroughlybred.com. All participants must register with Thoroughlybred prior to bidding. The platform offers an automatic bidding option that allows participants to set a maximum amount they are willing to pay for a season. Thoroughlybred will then bid on the buyer's behalf until either the maximum amount is reached, or the buyer becomes the highest bidder. The auction page on Thoroughlybred will feature the conditions for each season.

All proceeds from the auction will go to TBANJ, which uses the funds to promote the Thoroughbred breeding industry in New Jersey. Stallion seasons will be added until the auction begins Jan. 19, and a complete list of available seasons will be posted at www.njbreds.com.

For additional information, please contact the TBANJ office at 732-542-8880.

TBANJ hires Bill Caruso as Governmental Affairs representative

The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey (TBANJ) has retained Bill Caruso of Archer Public Affairs to serve as the organization's Governmental Affairs representative, bringing one of the state's most experienced political strategists to provide guidance and representation.

Caruso joins TBANJ with a résumé that spans nearly two decades at the highest levels of state and federal government. Prior to joining Archer Public Affairs, he served for almost five years as Executive Director of the New Jersey Assembly Majority Office in Trenton. In that role, Caruso was responsible for developing and implementing the Assembly majority's policy agenda and acted as the top aide to the Speaker. He served as lead staff negotiator on all major policy matters and coordinated closely with the Governor's Office, Senate leadership, and state departments.

Caruso managed a staff of roughly 30 policy researchers, communications personnel, and administrative assistants, overseeing the day-to-day operations of one of the Legislature's most influential offices. During his tenure, he played a central role in guiding numerous high-profile legislative initiatives, including landmark pension and health benefits reforms.

Before his work in the Assembly, Caruso spent more than 11 years as Chief of Staff to U.S. Rep. Rob Andrews, a Camden County Democrat. In Washington and New Jersey, he

directed all aspects of the congressman's policy development and public relations efforts, with particular focus on economic development, education, and defense issues. He supervised a staff of approximately 20 across both offices and also served as Andrews' campaign manager for more than a decade.

Caruso's background also includes service as Democratic legal and public relations advisor to the 2011 New Jersey Apportionment Commission, the body responsible for redrawing the state's 40 legislative districts after the 2010 census.

"Bill Caruso has been at the center of some of the most consequential policy discussions in New Jersey," the association said in a statement.

"His expertise and relationships will be invaluable as we work to support the long-term viability of Thoroughbred breeding in our state," said Michael Campbell, Executive Director of TBANJ. "We look forward to partnering with Bill as we continue advancing solutions that support the future of New Jersey's equine industry."

Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey meets with Secretary of Agriculture to discuss growth of the state's breeding industry

The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey (TBANJ) recently met with New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Edward Wengryn and representatives from the New Jersey Farm Bureau to discuss the current state and future advancement of the Thoroughbred breeding industry in the Garden State.

The meetings were convened to strengthen collaboration between the organizations and to identify practical pathways for supporting New Jersey's Thoroughbred breeders. Discussions focused on the importance of the breeding industry within the state's agricultural landscape, as well as the shared goal of ensuring long-term sustainability for equine farms and related agricultural operations.

Secretary Wengryn and Farm Bureau representatives expressed interest in working alongside the TBANJ to bolster breeding activity and enhance the economic and agricultural impact of the state's equine sector.

As a result of the productive meetings, the TBANJ Board of Trustees will prepare and submit a series of proposals aimed at increasing the New Jersey-bred foal crop. Expanding foal production is viewed as a key step in supporting local agriculture, preserving farmland, and maintaining the viability of equine-related businesses across the state.

The proposals will outline potential initiatives designed to attract and retain breeders, encourage investment in New Jersey-bred Thoroughbreds, and highlight the broader agricultural value created by a thriving equine industry.

The TBANJ looks forward to continued collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and the New Jersey Farm Bureau as the organizations work together to support breeders, strengthen rural communities, and advance the future of New Jersey agriculture.

2026 Racing Days

The New Jersey Racing Commission on November 19, 2025, approved a 2026 Thoroughbred schedule of 50 dates at Monmouth Park (May 9-September 13) and nine for an all-turf meet at the Meadowlands (September 18-October 16).

2026 RACING CALENDAR

MONMOUTH PARK

= 50 Racing Days - Monmouth Park
= 9 Racing Days - Meadowlands Racetrack
= 1 Racing Day - Far Hills

60 Total Racing Days

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST

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						1
2	3	5	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

monmouthpark.com

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THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY / 265 HIGHWAY 36, SUITE 1R, WEST LONG BRANCH, NJ 07764
TEL: 732-542-8880 / EMAIL: NJBREDS@GMAIL.COM / WWW.NJBREDS.COM

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

Membership Application

Member Information

NAME _____ SS#/FEDERAL I.D.# _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ COUNTY _____

TELEPHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Membership Categories

☐ Breeder — A breeder member shall be a person who owns the required interest in a broodmare or registered stallion domiciled in New Jersey; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. A breeder member shall have voting rights.

☐ Owner — An owner member shall be a person who owns a registered New Jersey- bred; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. An owner member will not have voting rights.

☐ Associate — An associate member is a person who is interested in owning, breeding, or racing horses in the State of New Jersey or in fostering economic activity through the breeding, ownership and/or racing of horses in the State of New Jersey. An associate member will not have voting rights.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Membership Dues

A check or money order for $100.00 must accompany this form. Spouses are encouraged to join the **TBANJ** under joint membership status. This fee would total $150.00 per couple. Each spouse must fill out a separate form to accompany the payment. Membership will be effective upon receipt and will be in force each calendar year and must be renewed annually.

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY
265 Hwy 36
Suite 1R
W. Long Branch, NJ 07764
732-542-8880
njbreds@gmail.com

North Carolina

THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

January 2026

President's message

Merry Christmas to everyone and a Happy New Year. As the year was winding down for 2025, everyone is getting exciting about the new year to come.

I hope everyone stays safe for the Holidays. And may all your wishes come true.

Please remember if anyone is interested in holding an office let me know as soon as possible. I look forward to your response.

Bonnie Herring
NCTA President

North Carolina Thoroughbred Association

(336) 622-3089
ncthoroughbred.com
ncthoroughbred@gmail.com
436 Sam Lowe Road
Siler City, NC 27344

Bonnie Herring, *President*

Linda Epley, *Vice President/ Secretary/Treasurer*

Directors: ***Arlee Arkofa, Caroline Cooper, Vince Mathews, Chris Stiller***

Introduction to Single B Farm Stallions in North Carolina Mendelssohns Red

Chestnut 2021 17.2 hh (Mature 18 hh)

Sire: Mendelssohn
Dam: Celtic Chant

We are so fortunate to have the opportunity to offer the stallion services of a son of the top Thoroughbred Race Horse - - - Mendelssohn. (Mendelssohns Red)

It is indeed through our good fortune that we were able to obtain and bring to North Carolina a Thoroughbred pedigree of such magnificent quality. Our initiative is to bring to our breeders an opportunity to enhance the breed, performance, and value of their horse.

You are invited (by appointment) to visit our farm, Single B Farm, and Mendelssohns Red to view this striking stallion. Single B Farm is located at 436 Sam Lowe Road Siler City, North Carolina 27344 336-622-3089 www.singlebfarm.com Check our website for Pedigree and Breeding Contract and any other information on Mendelssons Red .

Race Results

MOTION GRANTED – WINNER at Woodbine, Oct. 30; 1 1/16 miles on the all-weather track. Final time 1:47.21. **Motion Granted** was hustled at the start trying to get the lead. Cleared to the fence at the quarter pole, continued down the back straight, holding off chasing horses around the last turn, on the fence clinging to the lead on the upper stretch, tiring in the final furlong but held on for the win.

NCTA connection: William Thompson.

FORTUNATE MISSION – WINNER at Penn National, Dec. 5; 6 furlongs on the dirt. Track Fast. Final time 1:13.94. North Carolina-bred 2-year-old **Fortunate Mission** tracked in the three path, angled out to the five path at the top of the lane, led passing the sixteenth-pole and drew clear to win by 2¼ lengths.

NCTA connection: Art Bauer.

Hitting the Board

October 30–December 5, 2025

Date	HORSE	TRACK	NCTA CONNECTION	RESULTS
10/30/2025	Magic Token	Charles Town	Owned by William Thompson, Jr.	Unplaced
10/30/2025	Motion Granted	Woodbine	Bred and Owned by William Thompson, Jr.	**WINNER**
10/31/2025	Jersey Perfection	Gulfstream Park	Bred by Ken Orchard Jet M stable	Unplaced
10/31/2025	Cairo Caper	Churchill Downs	Bill Thompson Maple Leaf Farm	**2nd**
10/31/2025	Double Tough Tiger	Camarero Race Track	Bred by Beth Muirhead	**3rd**
11/1/2025	Mom's Martini	Gulfstream Park	Owned by Dan Shea - Shea D Boy''''s Stable	**2nd**
11/1/2025	Cainudothetwist	Montpelier	Bred by Bill & Carrington Price	**2nd**
11/1/2025	Good Medicine	Montpelier	Bred and Owned by Frank Batten	Unplaced
11/4/2025	Rockaway Reef	Horseshoe Indianapoli	Bred by Denise Walsh	Unplaced
11/6/2025	Hartful Hope	Mahoning Valley	Bred by Art Bauer Owned by George Ekherdt	Unplaced
11/8/2025	Nabokov	Churchill Downs	Bred by Frank Batten	Unplaced
11/9/2025	Cainudothetwist	Charleston	Bred by Bill & Carrington Price	Unplaced
11/9/2025	Reel Magician	Charleston	Bred and owned Denise Walsh	**2nd**
11/19/2025	Contrivance	Charles Town	Bred and owned by William Thonpson, Jr.	Unplaced
11/20/2025	Hartful Hope	Mahoning Valley	Bred by Art Bauer, Owned by George Ekherdt	Unplaced
11/21/2025	In Your Life	Fair Grounds	Bred by Nancy Shuford	Unplaced
11/21/2025	Motion Granted	Woodbine	Bred by and Owned by William Thonpson, Jr.	Unplaced
11/22/2025	Faultfinder	Woodbine	Owned by Bill Thompson	Unplaced
11/23/2025	Nabokov	Churchill Downs	Bred by Frank Batten	Unplaced
11/27/2025	Rockaway Reef	Churchill Downs	Bred by Denise Walsh	Unplaced
11/21/2025	In Your Life	Fair Grounds	Bred by Nancy Shuford	Unplaced
11/29/2025	Faultfinder	Woodbine	Owned by Bill Thompson	**3rd**
11/28/2025	Double Tough Tiger	Camarero Race Track	Bred by Beth Muirhead	**2nd**
12/5/2025	Fortunate Mission	Penn National	Bred by and Owned by Art Bauer	**WINNER**

North Carolina Thoroughbred Association

2025 MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME_____SPOUSE_____

FARM_____

MAILING ADDRESS_____

CITY_____STATE_____ZIP_____

E-MAIL_____

PHONE: HOME_____CELL_____WORK_____

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☐INDIVIDUAL @ $55.00

☐NON-PROFIT HORSE ASSOCIATIONS @ $20.00(covers cost of magazines)

Membership includes subscriptions to Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred Magazine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Involvement in the Thoroughbred Industry
(Please check any or all pertaining to you)

☐Breeder☐Racing☐ Steeplechase ☐Boarding☐Foaling
☐Lay-ups☐Race Training☐Racing Fan ☐Showing ☐Show Training
☐Hunter/Jumper ☐Eventing☐Dressage☐Pleasure ☐Other_____

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: **N.C.T.A.**
MAIL WITH COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: **Bonnie Herring, 436 Sam Lowe Road, Siler City, NC 27344**

Thank you for your support.

NORTH CAROLINA THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

YOUR NAME OR FARM NAME_____

HORSES IN TRAINING - 2025

Please list the horses you have BRED or OWN that are in training or racing. The Association will put them into our stable on Daily Racing Form. We will keep up with them through this medium and have news for the association and for the Mid-Atlantic. We will only use horses that finish in the money.

This will let us know what our members are doing on the racing front and inform everyone about your successes.

I will still have to trust you to keep us informed regarding the breeding. I love receiving news on how the horses are doing, who you are breeding to, and how you did at the sales. It is hard to find the time to sit down and send me this information, BUT PLEASE TRY.

Please take the time to fill this out for your racing stock. Please list all horses, even the ones I already have, so I can keep our stable updated. Use another page if you need more room.

HORSE'S NAME_____DAM_____DOB____ Bred/Own/Both ☐☐☐

HORSE'S NAME_____DAM_____DOB____ ☐☐☐

HORSE'S NAME_____DAM_____DOB____ ☐☐☐

HORSE'S NAME_____DAM_____DOB____ ☐☐☐

HORSE'S NAME_____DAM_____DOB____ ☐☐☐

Mail to: Bonnie Herring
NCTA
436 Sam Lowe Road
Siler City, NC 27344

Or send via E-mail at:
ncthoroughbred@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA HORSE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

PA Thoroughbred NEWSLETTER

January 2026
pabred.com

PA-BRED REMINDERS

- **Early registration:** Within 365 days of foaling
- **Yearling registration:** Dec. 31 of yearling year
- **Stallion registration:** Feb. 15 of year breeding
- **Broodmare domicile:** Dec. 1 or 14 days after a public sale or entering state if being bred back to PA-sire

VISIT PABRED.COM

- **Racing and breeding news**
- **PA-Bred entries/results**
- **Rules, regulations, forms**

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Pennsylvania is the perfect fit for stallions Frankie's Empire, Max Player and Fugitive

By Nikki Sherman

New stallions are on the move to Pennsylvania for 2026. Each of them packs a serious punch with a race record that included a trip on the Triple Crown trail and a stacked pedigree.

Five-year-old fresh retiree Frankie's Empire joins the stallion roster at WynOaks Farm in Delta, Pa., for $2,500. Max Player moves to Mountain Springs Farm in Palmyra, Pa., for $3,000. Joining him is Fugitive. All offer special consideration for Pennsylvania-foaling mares.

Frankie's Empire was a star from the get-go, winning first time out at Monmouth Park in June of his juvenile season. He finished third that summer in the $200,000 Sapling Stakes while meeting future superstar Dornoch for the first time. He also captured allowance races at Delaware Park and Parx Racing, defeating several future stakes winners including Maximus Meridius and Twilight Dancer.

Poor northern weather that winter sent Frankie's Empire south to Florida where he immediately lit up the tote board at 14-1 in his sophomore debut, capturing the 7-furlong $125,000 Swale Stakes at Gulfstream Park by 3½ lengths. He followed that up with a third in the $400,000 Fountain of Youth Stakes-G2, just 2 lengths behind Dornoch in the 1 1/16-mile test.

"He impressed (trainer) Michael Yates so much that he put him on the Derby trail," remembered owner Frank DeLuca. "He ran that huge race in the Fountain of Youth, just missing Dornoch – and honestly, if there was even a hint of a pace in that race, the story might have been different. We really thought we were on our way to the Kentucky Derby. And in the Florida Derby,

Frankie's Empire, a stakes winner at 3 in Florida, is a son of champion Classic Empire.

he was starting to make that big move on the turn when he took a bad step."

Despite that sudden derailment, Frankie's Empire came back to score a handicap win at Gulfstream that June. After a 10-month break, he returned in the Evangeline Mile Stakes in Louisiana this past April, rallying from last to finish third. He closed out his career with five wins and three thirds from 12 starts, along with $300,900 in earnings.

DeLuca noted, "His career was short, but it was packed with big moments with the odds stacked against him since he was a baby. We were only able to afford him in the first place because he stepped on a stick as a baby. It went through his hoof and into his pastern, and a lot of the big owners and trainers looked at him but didn't want to take the risk of spending six-figure money on a horse with a question mark. Thankfully our agent, Brenda Zoppo, saw through that and got us a special horse. He just powered through and became a serious racehorse."

Frankie's Empire was always destined to be a family legend, as he is named after DeLuca's son Frankie. His three siblings tease their brother that the colt was only named after him because they are all girls.

"When (he arrived), the kids were lined up with carrots and peppermints, but my son claimed him right away. Now he tells anyone who will listen that his dad named 'the best horse' after him. The name really comes from the instant bond the two of them had the minute Frankie's Empire stepped off the trailer."

Frankie's Empire is sired by Breeders' Cup Juvenile champion Classic Empire, out of the stakes-placed Dixie Union mare Donna D. He is a half-brother to stakes winner Chaparella and stakes-placed Streetlady. Classic Empire also sired Pennsylvania-bred millionaire Angel of Empire, a Grade 1 winner with a third-place finish in the Kentucky Derby behind none other than Dornoch's older half-brother Mage.

DeLuca emphasized that the decision to stand Frankie's Empire as a stallion was multi-pronged. "He's balanced, super athletic and one of those horses who just moves right. He was the type who wanted to win no matter what the circumstances were. Nothing rattled him. One thing every trainer kept saying is how incredible his mind was. His great temperament made their lives easier, with his kindness and willingness to do the right thing, which is exactly what you want to pass down to foals. When people look at him now as a stallion, I hope they see him as a fighter, a horse who had every excuse to fail, but instead kept showing up, kept climbing the ladder and kept proving people wrong. That's why we're so excited for people to meet him."

•••

Max Player joins the deep stallion roster at Mountain Springs Farm after two seasons in New Jersey. He's by the terrifically bred champion Honor Code, a son of A.P. Indy from the female family of Hall of Famer Serena's Song. His stakes-winning dam Fools in Love (Not For Love) is a half-sister to millionaire International Star, whose resume includes four graded stakes victories. Honor Code is the sire of the young stallion Honor A. P., who already boasts multiple stakes winners from just two crops to race, including Grade 2 winner Margie's Intention and 2025 juvenile stakes winner Romeo, each million-dollar sales horses.

Max Player is a Grade 1-winning, classic-placed millionaire.

Max Player himself is a millionaire with career earnings of $1,551,266. He broke his maiden at Parx Racing at 2 by daylight before a smashing sophomore debut in the $250,000 Withers Stakes-G3 at Aqueduct where he ran off to win by 3¼ lengths. That was the topsy-turvy classic season of 2020 – in his second start of the year he finished third in the Belmont Stakes-G1, followed by a third in the Travers Stakes-G1, both behind Tiz the Law. He finished fifth of 15, just behind Honor A. P. in fourth, in the Kentucky Derby-G1 in September and fifth again (out of 11) in the Preakness-G1 in October. And he improved at 4. Max Player won on a fast track and in the slop, capturing the $1 million Jockey Club Gold Cup-G1 and $400,000 Suburban Handicap-G2, both historic New York handicap races run at 1¼ miles. In the latter, he defeated Dubai World Cup-G1 winner Mystic Guide by a hard-fought neck.

Owner George Hall noted, "Max Player was a durable racehorse and showed tremendous talent over his career. He was one of the only horses of his generation to compete in all three Triple Crown races. Considering his racing record, I think breeding to Max should be compelling for owners of mares in Pennsylvania."

Max Player brings with him a crop of yearlings foaled in New Jersey that Hall

A few words from the Executive Secretary

Our sixteenth annual Stallion Season Auction will be held from Jan. 12 to Jan. 18 on thoroughlybred.com. Please check out pabred.com for a current list of available seasons. Continue to check the list as it grows every day.

The first two of four PA-Bred 2yo Stakes to finish up 2025 were run at PARX Nov. 26. Congratulations to the Ed Bussinger-bred Divine Intentions, who led the field all the way around the oval and held on to win the $100,000 Shamrock Rose Stakes. Congrats also goes out to Cash is King LLC and LC Racing LLC-bred Mailata, a gate-to-wire winner by 3½ lengths of the $100,000 Nursery Stakes. Also on that day's card, Westerly Farm-bred Maximus Meridius won his second open-company black-type race of 2025 when he took home the Let's Give Thanks Stakes.

The last two stakes of 2025 for PA-Bred and Sired 2yos were scheduled on Dec. 30 at PARX. I'm happy to announce that there will be no registration fee for the Series in 2026. If your 2YO is a PA-Sired PA-Bred, you will be automatically registered and eligible to run.

Congratulations also goes out to the 18 breeders who surpassed the $100,000 mark in total awards through October! Our leaders, Warriors Reward and Uptowncharlybrown Stud, were fighting it out again in 2025.

We have over 300 breeders that have received an award in 2025. If you want to become part of our program or just want more information, give me a call at 610-444-1050.

Good Luck in the New Year and remember, PA is the only place to breed and race!!

Fugitive comes to PA with first-crop runners in 2026.

is thoroughly impressed with. “They look tremendous and we are looking forward to those dropping in 2026.”

Ironically, both Max Player and Frankie’s Empire have owners with their own farms in New Jersey, but they have purposely chosen to offer their stallions in the Keystone State.

“Prior to deciding to move Max Player, I attended a luncheon organized by the Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association and found everyone to be very enthusiastic about PA horse racing and breeding,” said Hall. “They were very supportive about bringing Max Player over. I have always been a fan myself of Pennsylvania racing. Over the years, I have run horses at Presque Isle, Penn National and Parx. As a matter of fact, Max’s first two races were at Parx. I find the breeding program to be exceptional and it made sense to stand Max in PA for the foreseeable future. I am excited to have Max in PA and look forward to rooting for his offspring all across the state.”

Frank DeLuca wholeheartedly agrees. “The PA breeding program is incredibly strong. The bonuses, awards and support system make it one of the best places to stand a stallion or breed a mare. I have heard from many breeders in the state who say how helpful the (PHBA) has been with local breeders and reward people who invest in young horses. With a program that generous and well-run, it was an easy decision to bring Frankie’s Empire to PA.”

Pennsylvania is also just plain sentimental for DeLuca, who credits owner Jack Armstrong and trainer Mark Fusco as mentors. “When we were just getting started as young owners back in 2003, PA was the place where everything clicked for us. It has always felt like home turf for us. It’s where our roots are, where we learned the ropes and where a lot of our best racing memories have come from. So between our history there, the strength of the program, the people we’ve trusted for over 20 years and the team at WynOaks, Pennsylvania just felt like the perfect fit.

Mountain Springs Stables is introducing Fugitive to its stallion roster for 2026, as the winning son of leading stallion Candy Ride (Arg) moves from West Virginia. The 9-year-old, out of the graded stakes-placed Elusive Quality mare Elusive Fate, is a half-brother to stakes winner Farsighted (Bernardini) from the female family of Grade 1 winner Gemologist.

Candy Ride is a true sire-of-sires, making Fugitive an intriguing option for breeders looking for an outcross at a bargain. Candy Ride is represented by current sires Gun Runner, Vekoma, Game Winner, Mastery and Unified and is well-known for dozens of Grade 1 winners include champion Shared Belief and 2025 Dubai World Cup winner Hit Show.

Fugitive was a six-figure sales yearling and 2-year-old who debuted at Gulfstream Park for Three Diamonds Farm and trainer Mike Maker. He ultimately broke his maiden by an emphatic 9¼ lengths in a Charles Town maiden special weight. Fugitive stands for private contract.

PA-Bred Fund Statistics: Top Earners

January 1 through October 31, 2025

LEADING EARNERS - TOTAL AWARDS

Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total	Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total
Warriors Reward	594,112	179,533	773,645	Sylmar Farm Inc.	146,233	0	146,233
Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	400,407	173,700	574,107	Peter Giangiulio	118,585	0	118,585
Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	147,884	156,518	304,402	Y. Jerry Kolybabiuk	113,276	0	113,276
Northview Stallion Station Inc.	0	243,690	243,690	Kathleen Brady	109,917	0	109,917
Blackstone Farm LLC	228,696	0	228,696	Godstone Farm LLC	109,178	0	109,178
Arrowwood Farm Inc.	169,400	0	169,400	Joseph Imbesi	105,879	0	105,879
Glenn E. Brok LLC	101,932	64,645	166,578	Newell Thoroughbreds Ltd.	101,831	0	101,831
Steven W. Young Racing LLC	98,361	53,098	151,459	Richard N. Miller	82,988	17,725	100,712
Equivine Farm LLC	149,128	0	149,128	W M T Stables Inc.	98,917	0	98,917
Pewter Stable	115,456	31,702	147,158	Town and Country Farms Mgmt LLC	97,037	0	97,037

LEADING STALLIONS

Fund Money includes Stallion Awards only

Stallion Name	No. of Races	Award Total	Stallion Name	No. of Races	Award Total
Warrior's Reward	388	179,533	Winchill	149	31,702
Uptowncharlybrown	370	173,700	Well Spelled	68	30,658
Weigelia	260	150,586	Medallist	36	27,251
Hoppertunity	251	99,507	Pat On the Back	36	19,161
Social Inclusion	139	75,450	Red Vine	35	18,902
Uncle Lino	113	71,863	Boisterous	83	15,528
Peace and Justice	122	53,098	Emperor Tiberius	30	15,304
Rowayton	68	50,377	Talent Search	48	15,284
Jump Start	104	40,751	Il Villano	38	14,868
Eastwood	63	33,189	Flashback	32	13,715

LEADING HORSES

Fund money includes: PA-Bred Races, Breeder and Stallion Awards and PA-Bred Owner-Bonus Payments

Horse	Pedigree	Breeder	Races	Pa Bred Stakes	Breeder Award	Stallion Award	Owner Bonus	Total
PACHELBEL*	Hoppertunity-Brilliant Sunshine	Newell Thoroughbreds Ltd.	15	14,850	95,831	23,958	53,008	187,647
COME PRIMA*	Well Spelled-My Sonata	Godstone Farm LLC	11	74,700	71,687	17,922	12,578	176,886
NATURE'S CANDY*	Uncle Lino-Easter Blossom	Y. Jerry Kolybabiuk	8	46,733	77,972	19,493	28,180	172,378
HOUGHTON SHUFFLE*	Medallist-Runs Like L	Melissa Houghton	7	67,620	50,240	12,560	16,000	146,420
CANDY REWARD*	Warrior's Reward-Unimagineable	Warriors Reward	6	44,100	74,160	18,540	7,500	144,300
SON OF THOR*	Rowayton-Charlybrown's Rose	Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	6	0	62,048	15,512	44,320	121,880
CAROUSEL QUEEN*	Uptowncharlybrown-La Padrina	Dennis Johnson	10	66,825	42,810	10,703	0	120,338
SILHOUTTE COVE*	Warrior's Reward-Silhoutte Island	Sylmar Farm Inc.	5	54,100	48,600	12,150	4,000	118,850
HARP'S HOT CORNER*	Weigelia-Katarica Disco	St. Omer's Farm	8	1,000	66,792	16,698	32,160	116,650
NINETYPRCENTMADDIE*	Weigelia-Amblin Easy	LC Racing LLC	6	69,350	34,188	8,547	2,420	114,505
BIG BOYS ANSWER*	Uptowncharlybrown-Empires Answer	Cavanaugh Breen Farm LLC	7	0	59,315	14,829	35,168	109,312
CARMELINA	Maximus Mischief-Complete St.	Lilith E. Boucher	4	59,400	29,520	0	13,200	102,120
JUMP A FOX*	Jump Start-Foxy A. G.	Peter Giangiulio	14	0	49,215	12,304	32,399	93,918
FAR MO POWER*	Uncle Lino-J. D. Safari	Peter Giangiulio	7	0	49,616	12,404	31,240	93,260
NINJA PRIZE*	Warrior's Reward-Lemon Strudel	Kathleen Brady	9	0	44,240	11,060	31,600	86,900
JOHN DUTTON*	Eastwood-Reconsider	Town and Country Farms Mgmt LLC	6	8,250	48,208	12,052	16,770	85,280
WILD VINE*	Red Vine-Praslin	Bobby R. Rankin Jr. Estate	4	26,950	32,648	8,162	15,620	83,380
SOCIALLY AWKWARD*	Social Inclusion-Bluegrass Smile	Blackstone Farm LLC	8	0	48,348	12,087	19,380	79,815
OKIE DEN DEN*	Uptowncharlybrown-Baetykaty	Equivine Farm LLC	15	0	44,051	11,013	24,608	79,672
OHIO JOE	Jimmy Creed-Little B Rosson	Howard C. Schaeffer Jr.	8	44,100	19,824	0	15,720	79,644

**Denotes PA-sired*

SCTOBA

South Carolina

Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2026

Racing Across the Nation

We saw four South Carolina training center graduates cross the finish line first in stakes between Oct. 22 and Nov. 10.

Randy, Jason and Kala Rentz's former student, Nature's Candy, stalked the leader early in the Disco Chick Stakes at Parx Racing Oct. 22 before taking control in the stretch and drawing clear to a 2½-length victory. Owned by Freedom Racing LLC, she is trained by Hugo Padilla and was ridden by Andy Hernandez.

On Oct. 25, Ryka, another Rentz Farm graduate, proved best in the Best of Ohio John W. Galbreath Stakes for 2-year-old fillies at Mahoning Valley Race Course. Ryka stayed within 2½ lengths of the lead for the first three-quarters of a mile. She then let the leader extend her lead to 4 lengths. At the top of the stretch, Ryka kicked into gear, took control inside the eighth-pole and crossed the finish line 2¾ lengths in front. This filly is owned by Fairwinds Farm, trained by David Woolchuck and was ridden by Angel Diaz.

Map of the Moon won her debut at Keeneland Oct. 11, then made it two in a row when winning the Stewart Manor Stakes for 2-year-old fillies at Aqueduct Nov. 7. Developed for her racing career by the Frank Wooten Stables in Camden, Map of the Moon raced near the back of the pack early before coming five wide into the stretch and putting in a strong rally down the lane to win by three-quarters of a length. The filly is owned by NBS Stable, trained by Kelsey Danner and was ridden by Axel Concepcion.

Muscle Shoals won his first two juvenile starts, breaking his maiden at Finger Lakes Nov. 3 and returning a week later to capture the Tin Cup Chalice Stakes at the same track. Muscle Shoals stalked the leader while four wide before taking control turning for home. He ran to the finish line as much the best, winning by 5½ lengths. He learned his early lessons at the Travis Durr Training Center in St. Matthews. Stonegate Racing Stable is the breeder and owner, M. Anothny Ferraro trains, and he was ridden in both races by Luis Perez.

November – Steeplechase month in South Carolina

During the month of November, the National Steeplechase Association held three steeplechase meets in South Carolina. On Nov. 9, the Steeplechase of Charleston was held in Hollywood. South Carolina Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association member jockey Bernie Dalton had a busy day. He rode Risk Taking in the feature race, the $35,000 Alston Cup allowance for owner Stonelea Stables LLC and trainer Julie Gomena to a resounding 13½-length victory. Dalton teamed up with his wife, trainer Kate Dalton, for second (Coal Boss) and third-place (Pudding Lane) finishes in earlier races.

SCTOBA member Arch Kingsley saddled Benjis Benefit (Ire) and Canudothetwist for second-place finishes, and SCTOBA member Virginia Lazenby's Del Rio Stable saw their horse, Harrenhal (Ire), score a second-place finish.

The Aiken Fall Steeplechase was held Nov. 22 and Arch Kingsley had a big day when saddling three winners. He trains Bee Well, an allowance winner by 1¾ lengths for owner Richard Colton; sent out maiden race winner Encosta (Ire) (by three-quarters of a length) for SCTOBA member Mark Buyck Jr.; and handicap winner Sweet Will (Ire) (by a length) for SCTOBA member Pierre Manigault's Hurricana Farm. Freddie Proctor rode all three.

Bernie Dalton rode Naturally Nimble (Ger) to a neck victory in the feature race, the $50,000 Holiday Cup Hurdle Stakes, for owner Shannon Hill Farm and trainer Neil Morris. Coal Boss recorded another second-place finish that day for the Dalton team.

The Colonial Cup meet held at the Springdale Race Course in Camden Nov. 23 marked the final day of the 2025 National Steeplechase season. While the $150,000 Colonial Cup-G1 was the feature race of the day, it was exciting to see Virginia Lazenby's Del Rio Racing's Coutach (GB) prove best in the $56,000 Hobkirk Hill Sweepstakes by 1¼ lengths. Coutach was saddled by Ricky Hendriks and ridden by Dan Nevin.

The Daltons teamed up to win a $30,000 Ratings Handicap Hurdle with Scoop the Pot, owned by Joseph Fowler. Scoop the Pot also is a graduate of the Travis Durr Training Center.

Here and There

■ Congratulations to SCTOBA member Virginia Lazenby's **Del Rio Racing**. Their horse Little Trilby (GB) was the winner of the $100,000 William Allison Stakes-G2 at the International Gold Cup Oct. 25 in The Plains, Va. He proved best by a half-length in a hard-fought victory. South Carolina resident Brandon

Dermody is a member of the ownership group.

■ Congratulations to SC-bred jockey **Taylor Kingsley**, winner of a maiden special weight at Presque Isle Downs Oct. 2 atop Chasing the Storm.

■ Congratulations to South Carolina residents **Barbara Davis and Missy Fallon**, whose horse Tested was a winner at Parx Oct. 29. He went through the breaking process at the Frank Wooten Stables in Camden.

■ **Puca**, the stakes-winning dam of Kentucky Derby-G1 winner Mage, Belmont Stakes-G1 winner Dornoch and Pennsylvania Derby-G1 winner Baeza, sold at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Mixed Sale Nov. 3 for $5 million in foal to Into Mischief. She was a resident of Franklin Smith's Elloree Training Center as a yearling and 2-year-old.

■ **Vodka With a Twist**, purchased as a yearling at the Fasig-Tipton Fall Yearling Sale in 2023 by McCutchen Training Center (Kingstree, SC) for $2,500, sold as a broodmare prospect at this year's Fasig-Tipton Fall Mixed Sale for $1,600,000.

South Carolina-trained winners

Horse	*Training Center*	*Date*	*Track*	*Type of Race*
Yoheda Money Maker	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	10/20/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Lifeisbutadream	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	10/20/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Bailout Billy	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	10/21/25	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
Mary's Lad	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	10/22/25	Keeneland	Maiden Special Weight
NATURE'S CANDY	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	10/22/25	Parx Racing	Disco Chick S
Cairo Surprise	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	10/23/25	Penn National	Maiden Special Weight
King's River	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	10/25/25	Laurel Park	Starter Allowance
RYKA	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	10/25/25	Mahoning Valley	Best of Ohio John W. Galbreath S
Indigo Woods	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	10/26/25	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
East Coast Girl	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	10/29/25	Finger Lakes	Starter Allowance
Tested	Frank Wooten Stables	10/29/25	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
Feeling the Fire	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	10/31/25	Laurel Park	Starter Allowance
Single Dot Yaht	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	10/31/25	Churchill Downs	Starter Allowance
Scoop the Pot	Kate Dalton/Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/01/25	Montpelier	Handicap
Fifty B M G	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/01/25	Woodbine	Allowance
Scarlet Raider	Arch Kingsley	11/01/25	Montpelier	Training Flat
Muscle Shoals	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/03/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Quasi Warrior	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/03/25	Parx Racing	Allowance
Grandma's Girl	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/04/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Delightful Hire	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/06/25	Penn National	Starter Allowance
Kings Leap	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/07/25	Aqueduct	Allowance
MAP OF THE MOON	Frank Wooten Stables	11/07/25	Aqueduct	Stewart Manor S
Bolt Dior	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/08/25	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Camila Catalina	Mason Springs	11/08/25	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Rina Is Fire	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/09/25	Laurel Park	Maiden Special Weight
MUSCLE SHOALS	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/10/25	Finger Lakes	Tin Cup Chalice S
Liljestrom	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/12/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Hey Pal	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/12/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Heart Headed	Frank Wooten Stables	11/14/25	Churchill Downs	Allowance
Faire Plaisir	Legacy Stable	11/15/25	Churchill Downs	Starter Allowance
Animal Kingston	Neil Morris	11/15/25	Callaway Gardens	Allowance
Blue Kingdom	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	11/15/25	Aqueduct	Allowance
Nycon	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/19/25	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Bee Well	Arch Kingsley	11/22/25	Aiken	Allowance
Encosta	Arch Kingsley	11/22/25	Aiken	Maiden Special Weight
Sweet Well	Arch Kingsley	11/22/25	Aiken	Handicap
Scoop the Pot	Kate Dalton/Travis Durr Tng Ctr	11/23/25	Camden	Handicap

VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA RACING COMMISSION AWARDS COLONIAL DOWNS A RECORD 48 RACE DAYS IN 2026

At its December 15 meeting, the Virginia Racing Commission (VRC) approved an expanded and adjusted 48-day live racing season for Colonial Downs Racetrack in 2026. This will be the most live racing days ever held in one season at Colonial in its nearly thirty-year history.

To make live racing more accessible to Virginia race fans and families, each race week throughout the summer will feature an additional day of weekend racing with a new Thursday through Sunday schedule. Standard post time for race days will be 12:30 PM. The 2025 meet featured a Wednesday thru Saturday schedule.

The season will begin with a special three-day Virginia Derby meet on March 12-14 anchored by the $500,000 Derby on Saturday, March 14. After a sold-out 2025 race that drew more than 8,000 race fans to Virginia's premier thoroughbred racetrack, the stakes will again serve as Virginia's only Kentucky Derby qualifier race with the winning horse securing a spot in the field for the 152nd Kentucky Derby at historic Churchill Downs.

Following the March meet, the racing season will continue with 45 days of live racing each Thursday through Sunday from June 25 through a special day of racing on Labor Day, Monday, September 7. The summer meet will include the annual Colonial Downs Festival of Racing with the iconic Arlington Million, the Old Dominion Derby, and additional high-profile graded stakes races throughout the summer.

"With a Kentucky Derby qualifier, new weekend race days, and the biggest racing schedule in track history, 2026 promises to be an unforgettable season at Colonial Downs," said Frank Hopf, Senior Director of Racing Operations. "We cannot wait to welcome horsemen from around the country to Virginia for another season of competition."

Fans pack the Colonial Downs trackside area at the 2025 Virginia Derby (Backlight Photography).

Hopf addressed VRC Commissioners at the meeting and noted some positive takeaways from the 2025 campaign. He said the $6.5 million handle on Virginia Derby Day — the first time the Derby was contested on dirt — was a record and that the top two finishers, American Promise & Render Judgment, went on to compete in the "Run for the Roses". Tickets for the 2026 Virginia Derby went on sale November 10 and to date, 2,600 tickets have been sold. In comparison, the 2025 edition had 1,100 tickets sold as of February 1 — and it still resulted in an advance sale sellout.

Hopf said a total of $110 million was bet over this year's 44-day meet which established a record. A new 40-person backstretch dormitory opened in time for the summer meet which increased horsemen housing capacity to 240 people. Colonial received more stall and dorm applications than there was space for. He praised the efforts of Racing Secretary Dan Bork and the race office staff who improved the track's overnight programs. Hopf added the track expanded its capacity in the third floor Jockey Club Dining Room from 324 to 524 by removing higher limit HHR terminals to free up space for track attendees.

When asked about the upcoming meet schedule change — from Wednesday thru Saturday to a Thursday thru Sunday weekly slate instead — Hopf said "It looked like the regular patrons chose either Wednesday or Thursday to attend, but not both days. We felt by switching out Wednesday with Sunday and offering full weekend cards throughout the summer that more fans would be encouraged to attend."

Virginia HBPA Executive Director Glen Berman also spoke at the VRC meeting and said his group has secured a horsemen's contract with Colonial heading into the 2026 season. He noted four key points in his presentation.

Colonial Downs Race Secretary Dan Bork was credited with improving the track's overnight race program in 2025 (VEA photo).

Keys Discount won the 2025 Virginia Gold Cup at Great Meadow last spring. The 2026 Gold Cup is scheduled for May 2 (Douglas Lees).

Stability, with 48 race days spread between two seasons over five different months.

Quality, with a Grade 1 Stakes leading the way. The Arlington Million will continue to anchor Colonial's signature Festival of Racing card which produced a record $10.4 million wagering handle in 2025. Other graded stakes on the under card that day include the G2 Beverly D and G2 Secretariat.

Investment, with infrastructure improvements in the paddock, turf course, irrigation system and handicap accessibility to some of the backstretch areas. Current pavers in the saddling paddock will be replaced with new ones — not just in the walking ring area but in paddock stalls and on the path to the track entrance/exit area. The paddock surface will also be excavated and backfilled, and additional drainage will be added. Turf course drainage in the east end of the track will be improved with plans to have that in place by 2027. The extra time will avoid any disruption during the upcoming season. The overall turf course irrigation system project is in its final phase and will be completed by race time. Improved wheelchair access to the paddock and backstretch areas like the race office and horsemen's building will be in place for the meet as well.

Growth, with flexibility to expand the number of racing dates in 2027 based on performance of Colonial's Historical Horse Racing (HHR) terminals. There are currently 4,867 machines deployed at various Rosie's Gaming Emporiums around the state including 1,650 at The Rose Gaming Resort & Hotel in Dumfries and 1,199 at the Richmond location.

Berman also noted that horse shuttles will operate again on race days from Fair Hill, and possibly from Laurel on days when the Virginia and Maryland meets don't overlap. Initially, Laurel's spring schedule will conflict with the New Kent track's slate on two days — March 13 & 14.

Entries will again be taken one week in advance of each actual race day. For the spring meet, Hopf plans to open the stable area on Saturday March 7 with training available the next day. For the summer meet, the stable area will open two weeks out and stay open one week after the last race day. Training will be available seven days a week.

Details on a plan for steeplechase racing in the 2026 summer meet are still being worked on. Options include continuing the program like this past season — where jump races took place on Thursday's before the flat portion of Colonial's card began — or running jump races on separate days away from flat race cards. The Virginia Gold Cup, which offers pari-mutuel wagering, was awarded their traditional dates at the VRC meeting. Their spring meet will take place on Saturday May 2 and the fall session is slated for October 24.

DR. RICHARD HARDEN, LONG TIME VIRGINIA EQUINE VET, RECOGNIZED AT VRC MEETING

Members of the Virginia Racing Commission recognized Dr. Richard Harden for over two decades of service to the Virginia Racing Commission and Virginia horse racing industry at its December meeting.

Dr. Harden brought his extensive expertise as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine to the Commission, serving in critical roles including Commission Veterinarian and Equine Medical Director. Throughout his tenure, Dr. Harden was a steadfast advocate for the health, safety and welfare of the equine athlete, ensuring that the highest standards of veterinary care and integrity were maintained at Virginia's racetracks. A proclamation was presented to Dr. Harden noting the Commission's "appreciation for his years of faithful service and significant contributions to the horse racing industry in the Commonwealth."

Dr. Richard Harden was recognized by Stephanie Nixon and Jeff Tanner of the Virginia Racing Commission for over 20 years of service (Jesse Sharpe photo)

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Virginia Breeders Fund

West Virginia
THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
Newsletter January 2026

Cumulative Gifts of 2025

By Jeff Gilleas

I'll be your Holiday column mouthpiece for horse racing empowerment at the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races.

Aiming to fuel an enjoyable conversation, let's recall innovation, discovery, reconciliation and appreciation, as 2025 was a harbinger of good things to come at my four-legged peppermint wonderland.

1) BONUS BONANZA – RETURN OF THE HAIRCUT BILL MONEY

This was a situation where horsemen and politicians stood united and committed to a common purpose to resist the pressure of neighboring competition and strengthen home field advantage.

Senate Bill 75 underscored the West Virginia legislatures desire to support their racing industry and its people. Championed by Senator Patricia Rucker and co-sponsored by Jason Barrett, Darren Thorne and Tom Willis, the restoration of purse funds enables owners, trainers and breeders to benefit from their law-makers economic response.

2) TRUE GEM AWARD – TEACHINTHERELEASE

Bred by John A Casey, this son of Windsor Castle out of Romantic Cork was claimed for $20,000 in June 2024, and under trainer Stephen Murdoch's tutelage has become a first-rate substantive renovation.

Last year at age 5, he won the $300,000 Sam Huff West Virginia Breeders Classic by 14¼ lengths and followed-up that success by dismantling an elite field in the Randy Funkhouser Memorial as part of a five-race win streak for owner Robert L. Cole that also included the Frank Gall Memorial. Teachintherelease appears willing to move to the head of his division and grapple for the title of older West Virginia male.

3) TEAM SPIRIT AWARD – STAMPEDE FOR A CAUSE

Estimates ranged from 3,000 to 5,000 people, on a normally unpretentious Thursday evening, that rallied to support the Men Wear Pink Campaign of the American Cancer Society.

The draw was the unusual appearance of exotic animals, namely: camels, zebras and ostriches competing in races with many of our hardy jockeys as partners.

The evening of great family entertainment had the press box crew unable to recall a larger crowd at Charles Town Races in the last 20 years, with a few old-timers setting the jam-packed grandstand, apron and parking lot numbers closer to 10,000.

4) THE MOVER OF MOUNTAINS AWARD

Large-scale purses at smaller venues often serve at the core of neighborhood interest, fostering an engagement with nationally recognized racing stars. The occurrence of quality can measure the health and depth of the local racing product. The Charles Town Classic races have featured many runners that have gone on to participate at the Breeders' Cup World Championships.

Vahva, Banishing and Bentornato are a few Charles Town all-stars, with Bentornato triumphant in the 2025 $2,000,000 Breeders' Cup Sprint-G1.

5) MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Trainer Tim Grams has put his heart, soul and hip (replacement surgery in 2025) into this business. Thus it was a fitting tribute for the hard-working horseman when his homebred Moonlit Notion rambled home in the $75,000 Coin Collector Stakes in May to provide him his 1,000th career victory.

Tim started training in 1996 and has been ranked among the top of

Charles Town's leading conditioners for years.

A jockey's life is often full of bumps and bruises, but Arnaldo Bocachica, a native of Carolina, Puerto Rico, has had a guardian angel riding with him, and on Oct. 1 recorded his 3,000th career win.

Arnaldo won his first race in 2006, and has consistently demonstrated his formidable skills ever since.

6) WOMEN'S PRESTIGE AWARD

Luck is when you succeed once, but when you win the most important West Virginia-bred filly and mare race of the year (Cavada) three out of the last four years, that is skill. Kristy Petty is proof women are eminently qualified to compete on the same stage as men. It is a testament to the training and mental state of the horses in her care.

Petty Perfect, a daughter of Candygram, has been an intensely consistent individual with an astonishing 16 top-three finishes in a row.

7) INVASION OF BUGS – APPRENTICE RIDERS ADD DEPTH

It's not unusual to find apprentice jockeys migrating to Charles Town, but to find ones with this much early promise is an abnormality.

The learning curve can be enormous, however Juan Belisario, Moises Santaella and Warren Ebow III, in a very short period, have made the most of their opportunities. The trio's enthusiasm is contagious and handicappers/horsemen love their willingness to aggressively contend for any placing.

8) STANDING OVATION AWARD

If you've ever trained a Thoroughbred racehorse then you understand how difficult it is to link consistency with longevity. Trainer Jeff Runco and his support system appears to have mastered the art of defying time.

The man who is closing in on 5,000 career victories and has over $71 million in lifetime earnings announced that ageless sprinter-extraordinaire Penguin Power was retired at the age of 10. He had at least one win for nine consecutive years.

9) THANK-YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Jack Harper was a dedicated animal lover, and his friends fondly recall him as an avid outdoorsman. He passed in April 2020, survived by his wife of 26 years, Patricia "Jane" Anderson.

Jack served in the United States Army, 167th Airlift Wing, was a Vietnam Vet, and a trainer. The future remains to be written, but Jane is currently honoring her late husband with a gifted homebred named Tico Grande, never worse than third in seven starts in 2025.

Anderson-Harper, a former VA nurse, said she had nearly given up on the game until this son of Fiber Sonde reeled off four consecutive dominating wins.

10) LOVE OF THE GAME

From 12-year-old Anthony Croson to 75-year-old Robert "Bobby" Lotts, horse racing is the game they idolize.

This year, young Anthony gained regional awareness when a filly he bred named Allformenoneforyou captured the $75,000 Its Binn Too Long Stakes in April. On any given night, he can be seen shadowing his father, who works for Cyndy McKee, crumpled program in hand, sprinting from the paddock to the winner's circle.

Bobby Lotts has functioned in various capacities in the horse industry. His suit and tie appearance beckons one back to the dignified days, when horse racing was an elite American sport.

Always carrying himself with a professional bearing, Mr. Lotts works as a part-time steward/racing official, and is proof there is no school like old school.

Hopefully, his style will help others embrace the influence.

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- The West Virginia Breeders Classics pays out almost $1 million in purses for WV-bred and/or -sired horses. It is held annually on the second Saturday in October.
- $800,000 in purses are allocated for up to 16 WV accredited stakes races during the year.
- Supplemental Purse Awards of up to 10% of the winner's share of the purse to the owner, breeder, and/or sire owner of the accredited WV-bred and/or -sired winner.
- West Virginia offers year-round racing with approximately 165 race days per year.

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The Comeback Kid

By Betsy Burke Donley

Turning into the stretch at Charleston's Stono Ferry racecourse, Gus Dahl was caught in a kind of twilight zone, a murky mix of reality and dream.

He was alone on the lead, way out front aboard the flying Forever Hopeful with 220 yards to the wire when a slow-mo silence hit him.

It lasted just a couple seconds, but he says it felt like an eternity.

"I came to the bend and no one was with me. Not even near me," Dahl recalls. "I thought, is this really happening?"

Twenty in front on his way to setting a new course mark, it really was happening.

Seven-and-a-half years away from race riding and a decade out of the winner's circle, Dahl jumped back onto the American steeplechase stage with a 21-length romp at the Nov. 9, 2025 meet with the owner-trained Forever Hopeful for Bill Wofford.

Dahl had abruptly quit the circuit after just a few rides the spring of 2018 and moved to Lexington, Kentucky. Other than a single day he rode in the Covid summer of 2020, he hadn't ridden a race until Wofford finally convinced him to come out of his self-imposed retirement to partner a quirky chestnut mare for him Oct. 5 at Foxfield.

Forever Hopeful finished up the track at the Virginia meet, but she showed promise and Wofford was pleased.

And just as abruptly as he'd left, Dahl was back.

Wofford says the mare is hard to train - he calls her Scarlet, for Scarlet O'Hara. After Foxfield, Wofford ran her on the flat "to keep her sharp" Oct. 16 at Horseshoe Indianapolis and then headed to Charleston.

Forever Hopeful and jockey Gus Dahl head to post at the Colonial Cup Races on November 23, 2025. *©Tod Marks*

Wofford had last saddled a hurdle winner, Chief Chicago, in the claimer at the 2015 Block House.

No one really expected such a powerhouse performance from the maiden mare, the two-horse stable and his virtually unknown – well, unremembered, jockey.

When Forever Hopeful took off on top, jumped well and just kept going, Wofford had tears in his eyes.

"Everything went right for us," Wofford says. "I love being part of this comeback story, me, the mare, and especially for Gus."

Forever Hopeful set a new course mark – 3:53, and Dahl says it felt like coming home.

"You know, I forgot I missed it," Dahl says.

Forever Hopeful ran back at the NSA season closing Colonial Cup at Camden Nov. 23. She faced winners for the first time but jumped well and finished second. Dahl says the distance, 2 3/8ths, took a little out of her, but the team was happy with her performance. Dahl drove home to Lexington, Kentucky after the last race at Camden, and was on horses at Keeneland at daybreak on Monday - Sundays are his day off.

He says the little foray back into steeplechase gave him a reminder of how much he loved it, and Dahl didn't close the door on a return next spring.

NSA circuit veteran Bernie Dalton chased Forever Hopeful at Charleston – 21 lengths back in second with Joseph Fowler's Coal Boss. Dalton reversed it at Colonial Cup – 2 ¾ lengths in front of Dahl and Forever Hopeful atop Fowler's Scoop The Pot in the ratings hurdle.

"It's a good storyline," Dalton says. "It's great to see him back.

"It looks like he hasn't lost any of his abilities in the saddle judging by his rides at Charleston and Camden."

Dahl notes that the jocks' room is a little different than when he left nearly eight years ago. Most of the riders he rode against are retired, and he's in the minority now. "It feels weird to be one of only a few Ameri-

can-born jump riders in an Irish Sea full of imports," Dahl says with a laugh. "I take great pride in being an American riding with all these foreigners.

"I mean, we're all great friends, but it's a running joke."

A new name to some, longtime 'chase fans remember Dahl's big wins, powerful associations

Steeplechase fans new to the circuit might not recognize the name, but Gus Dahl, now 31, was a hotshot, an already-unusual American-born pro winning races at every level. From 2010 to the start of 2018, he rode for some of the sports' very best, including Hall of Famers Tom Voss and Jack Fisher, and for years he based out of the powerful Atlanta Hall, former longtime home to Tom Voss that passed to daughter Elizabeth after her father's 2014 death.

Dahl rode some really good horses including hurdle powerhouse Orchestra Leader, stakes winner Portrade, Brands Hatch, dual Virginia Gold Cup winner Ebanour, and he even got single calls on timber standouts Andi A'mu and Schoodic (on the flat) and he posted a sole DNF with Senior Senator in one of his few hurdle tries before his near-perfect timber career.

Dahl's career kicked off at the Blue Ridge Hunt Fall Races in Virginia, September 2010. He rode the card for Tennessee-based Karen Gray, winning his first point-to-point with Eye Said Scat Cat, and had his first winner under rules also for Gray – Cuse in the allowance hurdle at the Virginia Gold Cup meet in 2011.

Dahl's first stakes win was the 2013 Iroquois timber stake with Worried Man for Fisher.

He won the 2016 Turf Writers at Saratoga with the Elizabeth Voss-trained Portrade, but Dahl calls Irv Naylor's Ebanour his first "big horse." They swept the 2015 Far Hills timber stake, My Lady's Manor the next April, and two Virginia Gold Cups – 2016 and 2017.

The May 6, 2017 Gold Cup score was Dahl's last victory until Forever Hopeful at Charleston. He'd ridden only a few in spring 2018 before he left the circuit. He answered the emergency call for fill-in riders at a rescheduled Covid 2020 meet when the foreign riders were unable to get back in the U.S., but he hadn't ridden a race since.

Hadn't even thought about it, he says, because those years were filled with painful struggle to overcome addiction.

"I didn't think I'd ever go back," he says. Dahl doesn't talk about it much but says he had demons to face. "I had to change everything and get my life back on track."

He moved from Maryland to Lexington, got married and started working with flat horses. He stayed in flat racing after his divorce and a brief farrier career– breaking young horses for some of Kentucky's marquis operations including Winstar, and galloping and riding work for Keeneland-based trainer Matt Sims.

But the most critical modifications that he was making -- needed to make, were invisible to outsiders: It was Dahl, himself, he says, that was his own worst enemy.

Addiction was ruining his beloved career in steeplechase. Something had to give. Dahl decided to just walk away.

He had to regain control of his life, he says. "I was on a bad path."

He took it very seriously, and he completed a residential addiction program. He's five years sober and has become a quiet "advocate for seeking help. Your health is the most important part."

Dahl stayed involved in jump racing only to the point of schooling horses for Lexington trainers Hill Parker and Bill Wofford since there are no other jump riders in the area who could help with that important training chore. He never once considered going back to race riding, Dahl says. Like drinking, that was past, not present, and certainly not future.

He started to pivot this spring, attending the May 10 Iroquois near Nashville to watch friends Ted and Rita Thompson's China Beach run in – and win – the novice stake.

"I went to the jocks' room, talked to all the guys, and I liked seeing everybody back at the barn."

Then it was just a matter of time, and persuasion.

Dahl schooled Forever Hopeful for Wofford leading up to her fall hurdle targets, but he still didn't consider racing.

When Wofford asked him to ride Foxfield, Dahl surprised even himself when he said "yes."

"Bill Wofford is very convincing."

Wofford explains himself, saying he really likes how Dahl meshes with the sensitive chestnut. "He'd built a really nice partnership with her in just a few schooling sessions. She's tricky to ride, and I wanted Gus on her.

"I just love being part of this story, Gus's story. He's a skillful rider, and a great person. He deserves this more than anybody."

Gus Dahl: News and notes

His full name, Gustav Dahl, is Swedish. Father Dennis Dahl is from Swedish descent.

Dennis Dahl was a Franklin, Tennessee businessman and avid foxhunter with the Hillsboro Hounds. He died of a fatal heart attack in the hunt field February 9, 2013.

Mother Robin Hicks Dahl Owens was born into a Nashville, Tennessee equestrian clan with close ties to the local Middle Tennessee Pony Club. She showed at the top level until a recent injury left her in a wheelchair. She lives in Lexington, married to Mike Owens, who was longtime farm manager at Lexington's Cobra Farms.

He showed Pony of the Americas – POAs, as a kid and won everything from showmanship to bareback, pleasure to mounted games, and earned regional and national titles.

He was in Middle Tennessee Pony Club, but after earning his C3, Dahl discovered foxhunting and "that changed everything."

He was junior whip for longtime Hillsboro Hounds huntsman and one-time steeplechase jockey and trainer, Johnny Gray. He also learned from Johnny's then-wife and 'chase trainer Karen Gray, and fellow MTPC grad Ted Thompson, also Hillsboro staff and a trainer.

He was chosen for the 2009 TGSF Domestic Rider trip. He galloped that week for Jack Fisher and Doug Fout, and later in his professional career rode for both trainers. Dahl says it was a wonderful trip, and he maintains a friendship with fellow 2009 participant Mary Motion.

After high school, Gus Dahl enrolled at Middle Tennessee State University in their equestrian studies program. "That lasted three months," he says. His father died while he was in school – in 2013. Gus dropped out, moved to Maryland and gave race riding a shot as a career.

Through his friend Brian Crowley, a Jonathan Sheppard protege, Dahl got a job with a jump trainer in Lambourn, England then returned to Maryland to work out of Atlanta Hall in Monkton until he retired in 2018.

Since he un-retired in October, to date Dahl has won 47 of 406 rides in NSA and point-to-points.

Dahl says he plans to ride next year, though probably on a limited basis because of his job at Keeneland. He's got Matt Sims interested in converting at least one flat horse to jumps.

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Index to Advertisers

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Beren 41
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Eastwood 50
Enticed 29
Frankie's Empire 41
Ny Traffic 45
Smarty Jones 17
Uptowncharlybrown 51
Warrant 19
Weigelia 41
Winchill ..... Back cover
Zozos 17

Other Advertisers

Beau Ridge Farm 43
Country Life Farm ..... Inside front cover
Darby Dan Farm 39
Equine Discounts 66
Fasig-Tipton Midlantic 6, 7
Gainesway Farm 21
John Deere 49
Lane's End 23
Maryland-Bred Race Fund 4
Maryland Broodmare Incentive Program 10
Maryland Horse Career Program 28
Maryland Horse Library & Education Center 65
Maryland-Sired Maryland-Bred bonus program 11
Northview Stallion Station ..... Inside back cover
Spendthrift Farm 15
The Maryland Jockey Club 5
The Mill 18
Virginia Thoroughbred Association 1
West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association 3

— Looking Back —

10 years ago

■ Bright View Farm in Chesterfield, N.J., founded in 1975 by Philadelphia businessman and manufacturer John Connelly, and run by his daughter Christine Connelly, was one of the last remaining Thoroughbred nurseries in the state to breed for racing and the auction ring. "When John Connelly first purchased the 275 acres, part of the state's 'inner coastal plain,' a geographic area that contains some of the world's most fertile soils, he knew he had found an ideal place to raise horses," wrote Linda Dougherty.

Honored several times by the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association as New Jersey's Breeder of the Year, Bright View Farm had numerous

Christine Connelly

EQUI-PHOTO,M INC.

standouts over the decades, including graded stakes winner Wistful and top sprinter Just Smashing. Among Wistful's descendants was champion sprinter Lost In the Fog.

Bright View is co-breeder of multiple Grade 1 winner and $1.8 million earner Book'em Danno, one of the nation's top sprinters of 2025.

■ Fasig-Tipton Midlantic was gearing up for the 2016 sales season and highlighted a few recent graduates of the Timonium sales, including 2015 Grade 1 winners Stellar Wind, Dortmund and Materiality.

■ New Jersey resident Peter Kazamias, an owner, breeder and sometimes trainer, had a banner Thanksgiving Weekend as the breeder of two first-time stakes winners. His homebred Behrnik's Bank won the Blue Mountain Juvenile Fillies for Pennsylvania-breds at Penn National and New Jersey-bred Green Gratto sped to victory in Aqueduct's Fall Highweight Handicap-G3.

25 years ago

■ Garden State Park was sold to a real-estate development group, which would leave New Jersey with no year-round racing after 2001. Francis Murray, chairman of International Thoroughbred Breeders, did not disclose the purchase price. However, he said it would cover the company's $14-million debt on the property.

In Cherry Hill, some six miles east of center city Philadelphia, Garden State was under a seven-year lease to Pennwood, a joint venture of Greenwood Racing and Penn National Gaming. The lease, drafted and signed in late 1998, stipulated that ITB retained the right to sell the 225-acre property after the first 12 months.

The New Jersey track closed the stable area that winter, resulting in a stabling crisis at Philadelphia Park. "We have room for 1,500 horses and we received applications for 2,200," said the Pennsylvania track's racing secretary Ed Vomacka. Horsemen on the grounds were allocated 1,200 stalls, with 300 assigned to out-of-town outfits.

■ When it came to horses, Pennsylvanian Marshall Jenney did it all: rode, drove, bought and sold. The region lost a giant after the proprietor of Derry Meeting Farm died at age 60 in late November.

Wrote longtime Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association executive Mark McDermott: "Jenney's record over the years is well documented. Was there anything more impressive than his 'wall of fame' outside his yearling barn at Saratoga? Danzig, Storm Cat, Selkirk, Mrs. Penny, Tikkanen and Yankee Affair are just a few of the renowned horses who first saw the light of day at Derry Meeting."

■ Breeder Jonathan Sheppard won a free season to The Cool Virginian and sent the Double Zeus mare Romanissimo to the Virginia-based stallion in 1991. The result was 2000 Colonial Cup-G1 winner Romantic. "Even a blind pig sometimes. . ." laughed Sheppard of the chance mating. "It certainly wasn't pedigree analysis or anything. The only reason we sent that mare down there was because we got a freebie." It was the Pennsylvania-bred gelding's fifth stakes win.

■ The topper at Fasig-Tipton Midlantic's December sale was the 9-year-old Smarten mare Poised to Pounce, in foal to Polish Numbers. Her first foal, by the same sire, was stakes winner Quick 'n Smart. Consigned by Chanceland Farm as agent, the mare sold for $142,000 to David and JoAnn Hayden's Dark Hollow Farm and William Beatson. The mare's weanling filly sold at the same sale for $125,000 to Richard Golden.

The foal Poised to Pounce was carrying was future multiple stakes winner Play Bingo. All five foals bred by Dark Hollow and Beatson were winners, including stakes-placed Rhythmn Master and her final foal, Grade 1 winner Poseidon's Warrior. Poised to Pounce was named 2012 Maryland Broodmare of the Year.

50 years ago

■ Friends since childhood, Bob Manfuso, George Huguely, Jeff Huguely and Tommy Manfuso enjoyed success as owners of Fourbros Stable. The first horse they purchased together in 1973 – unraced 2-year-old filly Crackerfax – earned more than $70,000, most coming from seconds in the Barbara Fritchie, Geisha, Majorette and All Brandy handicaps.

Tommy expained the idea for Fourbros: "We have two cliques in our partnership. The younger brothers and older brothers. George and I have been friends for more than 25 years, and our wives are good friends, too. So we're the Older Brothers. . .

"Well, it was the Younger Brothers who got the idea for a racing stable. Naturally, I had been going to the races all my life with Dad [former national president of the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association and longtime breeder John Manfuso] and once in a while I even owned a horse that he bred. But I had never put up any real money to start a stable. So the Younger Brothers' idea sort of appealed to me."

SKIP BALL COLLECTION / MARYLAND HORSE LIBRARY

Fourbros Stable's Bob Manfuso, George Huguely, Jeff Huguely and Tommy Manfuso.

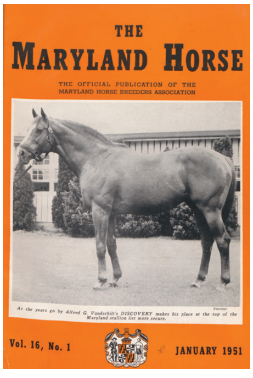
Crackerfax won the Geisha and Queen Anne handicaps later that year and retired with earnings of $129,019. One of Maryland's most successful partnerships over the next two decades, Fourbros Stable dispersed in 1993. Among their best runners was stakes winner and leading Maryland sire Shelter Half. Fourbros also bred the likes of Vaulted and her stakes-winning dam Aube d'Or, the second and third dams of Horse of the Year Knicks Go, as well as the first three dams of Grade 1 winner and producer Hookedonthefeelin.

■ Dr. Tom Bowman discussed Thoroughbred reproduction (which he noted that, until the official Thoroughbred birth date moves to a more reasonable time – like the middle of March – fertility rates will never be as good as they can be), his thoughts on problems related to breeding, and the care of foals with Lucy Acton.

A 1969 graduate of the University of Georgia School of Veterinary Medicine, with a master's degree in reproductive physiology from the University of Maryland, and a post-doctoral fellowship in animal reproduction at the University of Pennsylvania, Bowman also had years in residence at a large breeding farm, Thor Ramsing's Thornmar Farm in Chestertown, which he joined in 1970. Thornmar stood five stallions, who were booked to about 120 mares for the upcoming breeding season.

75 years ago

■ Sagamore Farm's veteran sire Discovery once again topped Maryland's stallions by earnings and ranked eighth in the nation. The son of Display sired the winners of 169 races and earners of $457,187 in 1950. The 20-year-old stallion stood for $2,000, the most of the 75 stallions in the state, but was already booked full.



In today's dollars, the stud fee for Discovery, one of the best stallions in the world, would be approximately $25,000.

■ Havre de Grace racetrack's days were numbered. Don Reed reported: "Consolidation of Maryland's major racing through the elimination of Havre de Grace as a separate racing center, thus providing additional days at the other three tracks and possibly even the reduction of the State's major tracks to two, were the items which held attention of public and horsemen alike. . .

"Havre de Grace, as everyone knows, has been in a precarious position ever since the advent of Garden State in New Jersey. Havre de Grace always drew half of its patronage from the Philadelphia area and consequently could not expect to maintain that patronage if Garden State was offering racing to Philadelphia fans much closer to home.

"The problem of working out a suitable date schedule had become increasingly difficult, in view of the long New Jersey season, and in the last couple of years, Havre de Grace has had to run some of its days at Pimlico to avoid conflicts with Garden State.

"Thus if any track was 'first' on the list of those likely to bow out of the picture, Havre de Grace was it."

Just as the magazine was going to press came the announcement that Havre de Grace stockholders approved, by a large majority, the sale of the track to the representatives of Laurel and Pimlico.

■ Cadet Irvin Naylor of McDonogh School accepted the Straus Memorial Trophy, won by Jackie Ewing's Moonbeam, at the Association of Maryland Horse Shows presentation dinner. Offered for the first time for those in the Junior Division (for horses and ponies), the award was given by Mrs. Straus in memory of her late husband, a former officer and strong supporter of the horse shows association.

Maryland Horse editor Humphrey S. Finney presents Irvin Naylor the Straus Memorial Trophy.

Naylor later rode in the Maryland Hunt Cup and became a prominent owner in American steeplechasing.

A Different Time

Groom Joe Hall rides the farm teaser (a son of the great sire Polynesian) down a lane toward the broodmare barns at Maryland's Sagamore Farm in 1966. During the breeding season, the teaser was hacked regularly around the farm to visit mares.

Peter Winants was on staff at *The Maryland Horse* during the 1960s, writing and taking photographs for the magazine before heading to Virginia where he headed up *The Chronicle of the Horse* magazine and later the National Sporting Library. Before his death in 2009, he gifted his prints on file at the MHBA, which have become part of the Maryland Horse Library as The Winants Collection.

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YOU MUST CHILL (15 wins, $620,402 to 8, 2025, Alphabet Soup H, Lebanon Valley S, 2nd With Anticipation S, Lebanon Valley S, etc.), **WINNING TIME** (3 wins, $253,620 to 4, Pennsylvania Nursery S, 3rd Parx Juvenile S.), Parx 2YO of 2024 **HONORABLE WIN** ($134,028, 2 wins at 2, Miss Behavior S., Miss Blue Tye Dye S., 2nd Finest City S.), **Chilling Hassle** ($30,680, 2nd Whistle Pig S.) and leading money winners WORD ON A WING (9 wins, $347,718 to 8), TEMPEST RISING ($186,846, won/placed 17 times to 5, 2025), PRINCE OF CHILL ($152,239, 3 wins to 5, 2025), MERRYCHILL ($130,434, 3 wins to 4, 2025), etc.

WINCHILL

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